

How to avoid unhealthy habits at the office

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, working professionals spend an average of 8.5 hours per day at work. Many professionals spend much of their time at work sitting down in front of a computer, which can be detrimental to long-term health.

Staying sedentary for long periods of time can contribute to a host of health ailments, including being overweight and obese. But professionals who work in offices can take various steps to ensure all that time at work is not having an adverse affect on their overall health.

- Get out of your seat. Modern workplaces are built around sitting, so workers must find some time to stand up and stretch. Sitting too long can compromise posture and lead to craning of the

neck for looking at the computer screen. Get out of your chair, walk around the office and get the blood moving in your body.

- Pack your lunch. Bringing lunch to work puts you in greater control over the foods you are eating. You can pack a healthy and diverse selection of foods. Don't forget to also bring some snacks that offer a healthy mix of protein and carbohydrates to keep your energy levels up. Otherwise, you may succumb to the temptation of the lunchroom snack machine.

- Take frequent breaks. Stale air inside an office environment can make you feel fatigued and less productive. Also, spending too much time behind your desk may contribute to feelings of stress and tension. Use every opportunity



Getting up and moving around is key to good health while on the job.

possible to get up and leave your office. Instead of sending an instant message or making a phone call to a coworker, visit him or her in person. Use your lunch hour to get outside instead of eating at your desk. Plan a brief, mid-afternoon walk outside of your office to clear your mind and get some fresh air.

- Disinfect surfaces often. Oftentimes, when one person at the office gets sick, many others soon follow. Colds and the flu can spread rapidly in close quarters. Keep your desk drawer stocked with some alcohol swabs or disinfecting spray and routinely clean your keyboard, mouse, touch-screen, and desk surfaces. You also can wipe off door handles and knobs around the office if you want to be proactive.

- Rest your eyes. Close your eyes and look away from the computer monitor every 20 minutes. Focusing on objects of varying distances can help keep the eyes strong and reduce fatigue.

It's not difficult to remain healthy at work. Breaks, exercise and watching what you eat can help.



Handling Valentine's Day when you have diabetes

Celebrating a holiday can be challenging for those with diabetes, as sweet treats are a part of many holiday celebrations. Come Valentine's Day, chocolates, candy and rich desserts can often be found on the menu, which can prove problematic for those who have to watch their blood-glucose levels.

Diabetics may be tempted to indulge in too many sugary foods on Valentine's Day. Fortunately individuals do not have to put their health in jeopardy in the name of Valentine's Day, as there are many healthy ways to celebrate with some minor tweaks.

- Focus on fun, not food. Rather than making food the focus of the day, shift your attention to all the fun things you can do with your valentine. Fill the day with activities such as ice skating or sightseeing. Even though the weather may be cold, it's possible to enjoy the great outdoors. Dress appropriately and enjoy a walk in the park, or do something out of the ordinary, like sledding. If you must retreat indoors, watch a romantic movie.

- Plan ahead when changing your diet. It's often possible to work small amounts of a particular dessert or food into your normal meal plan by adjusting what you eat for the rest of the day. If you plan ahead for a bite of chocolate, you can balance out sugar levels by eliminating something else. Keep tabs on your sugar levels throughout the day, and always weigh the benefits and drawbacks of the foods you eat.

- Include smart substitutions. Many favorite foods are available in low-sugar or sugarless varieties that are diabetic-friendly. Lean toward low-carb offerings and foods that are relatively low in fat. Baking your own treats or cooking your own meals will give you greater control over the ingredients used in your recipes, and that can pay big dividends in terms of health.

- Send nonfood items into the classroom. Diabetes affects people of all ages. When sending valentines into the class for children, do not accompany the cards with chocolate kisses or other candies. Instead, choose toys or keepsakes, such as heart-shaped erasers or scented stickers. Moderation is key when managing diabetes around Valentine's Day. Place a greater emphasis on time spent together, entertainment and socialization rather than potentially unhealthy treats.

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