

OFFICE STRETCHES TO DO AT YOUR DESK

KEEP YOUR BLOOD MOVING AND YOUR MUSCLES WARM!

You've probably heard how bad it is for you to be sitting at a desk all day, and maybe even felt the pains yourself in your back or wrists from constant computer use. Eight hours of sitting a day is quite a long time, and can really take a toll on your health in the long run, contributing to weight gain, increased cholesterol levels, and even heart disease. So we gathered up some quick exercises you can do right at your desk that will keep you moving and stretch out your muscles to avoid those aches and pains at work!

NECK



Neck Roll Close your eyes and let your chin drop down to your chest. Begin to circle your neck slowly, taking the right ear to the right shoulder, the head back, and then the left ear to the left shoulder. Try to keep your shoulders relaxed and not hurry through areas of tightness. Do 3-5 rolls in one direction, and then switch directions for another 3-5 rolls.



Shrug it Off Inhale deeply and shrug your shoulders, lifting them high up to your ears. Hold for a few seconds, then release and drop. Repeat three times. Shake your head slowly, yes and no. Repeat several times to relax your neck.

SHOULDERS



Shoulder Stretch Start by stretching the back of your shoulder by placing one hand under your elbow, then lift your elbow and stretch it across your chest. Don't rotate your body as you stretch. Hold for 15-30 seconds. You'll feel tension in the back of your shoulder. Relax and slowly return to the starting position, then repeat with the other arm.



Wall Push-Ups Stand facing the wall, roughly a foot away, and push yourself off the wall with your arms. Not an intensive workout, but it will get your blood moving and stretch your shoulders.



Upper Arm Stretch Lift one arm and bend it behind your head, then place your other hand on the bent elbow to help stretch your upper arm and shoulder. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds, then relax and slowly return to the starting position. Repeat the stretch with the other arm.

WRISTS/HANDS



Wrist Roll Roll your wrists regularly, around every hour or so. Roll the wrists 10 times clockwise, then 10 times counterclockwise. This will help prevent Carpal Tunnel Syndrome if you spend a lot of time typing.



Wrist Stretch Stand up and turn your hands so that the wrists face your computer and the fingers touch the edge of the desk. Lean in to the wrists and flatten your palms as much as possible. Back off if you feel pain.



Hand and Finger Stretch Extend fingers open as far as possible and hold for 5 seconds. Then make a fist as tight as possible and hold for 5 seconds. Repeat this several times.

BACK



Lower Back Stretch Sit forward in your chair and bring one of your knees toward your chest. Use your hands to grab the back of your thigh and gently pull it toward you. Keep your back straight, and be careful not to lean forward. Hold for 30 seconds. You'll feel tension in your lower back and the upper part of your buttock. Relax and slowly return to the starting position, then repeat the stretch with the other leg.



Back and Bicep Stretch Place your hands on the edge of your desk and slowly push your chair back until your head is between your arms and you're looking at the floor. Then slowly pull yourself back in. Repeat 15 times.



Reach For The Sky Sit up tall in your chair or stand up and stretch your arms overhead, interlocking your fingers. Turn the palms to the ceiling as you lift your chin up, tilt your head back, and gaze up at the ceiling, too. Inhale, exhale, release. Stretch both arms over your head and reach for the sky again. After 10 seconds, extend the right hand higher, then the left.

LEGS



Hamstring Stretch You get to put your feet up for this one! To ease the hamstrings and lower back, push your chair away from your desk and put your right heel on just until you sit up straight, and bend forward just until you feel a gentle stretch in the back of your leg. Flex your foot for a few seconds, then point it. Bend your foot for a bit farther, flex your foot again, and hold for 10 seconds. Repeat on the other side.



Standing Thigh Stretch Stretch the front of your thigh by standing up straight, placing one hand on a chair or desk for stability. Grab one of your ankles (or your pant leg) and bring it up toward your buttock. Remember to maintain an upright position, keeping your back straight and your knees parallel to one another. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Relax and slowly return to the starting position, then repeat the stretch with your other leg.



Leg Extensions Grab the seat of your chair to brace yourself and extend your legs straight out in front of you so they are parallel to the floor. Flex and point your toes five times. Release, and repeat.

Other tips to keep yourself moving at work:

Take the stairs instead of the elevator - two at a time to get a harder workout!

Have good back posture as you work at your desk.

Sitting on an exercise ball will help your posture more!

Park away from the door so you have to walk farther.

When you can: Stand rather than sit, and walk rather than stand.

If it's nice out, eat your lunch while walking outside!