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# 'Keeping Healthy on the Job'

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Office work may seem easy and relatively hazard-free at first. You report at the office, time in, sit on your desk for almost eight hours, walk around a bit to process or submit documents, time out, and go home. It's just the same stereotypical routine for five days a week. And so, there lies the health risk – especially sitting down too much.

According to research cited by Mayo Clinic, sitting for long periods of time are linked to obesity, hypertension, high blood sugar and cholesterol levels, as well as increased likelihoods of deadly cardiovascular disease and cancer. It was also found out that sitting too long (at a desk, behind a driving wheel, or facing a screen) for more than eight hours daily without physical activity poses similar risks to obesity and smoking.

What else can you do then? You have to bust your butt at an eight-to-five job in order to comply with your household's financial necessities. You cannot afford to enroll at the gym, or consult a nutritionist. You barely have the time and money to do so, but it does not mean you should compromise health for financial security.

Even in the smallest office or desktop setting, there is still that chance to fend off one's inclination towards becoming sedentary. To keep yourself healthy in an office or desk job, you keep in mind the 4R's. These are REINFORCE, REFRESH, REFUEL, and RECHARGE.

First, you have to REINFORCE your body. This means strengthening and keeping active even through simple physical activity. Spend five minutes brisk-walking outside your office, if you arrive a bit earlier than your time-in. You can also do some basic exercises every hour or so to ease the tension built up from sitting too long. Stretch your arms and legs. Shake your hands and kick your legs a little. Turn your neck left and right, up and down. Rotate your neck and hips. Take on some office tasks while standing up often. Any basic movement can not only bolster your body, but also drive away your drowsiness.

Next, you have to REFRESH in order to regain or maintain attentiveness, not to mention drive away drowsiness.

Massage your extremities, joints and other areas with stress build-up. Breathing exercises also help regain focus and ease tension. The objective is to stave off fatigue and sleepiness. A jar of mint candies on your desk or having a good cologne on standby can also freshen you up, as activating your sense of taste and smell is a great way at keeping yourself conscious. Most important of all is good old H<sub>2</sub>O. Dehydration can make you feel even more tired and sleepy after all, so you need to drink a glass of water every two to three hours.

As your body needs to replenish its fluids regularly, water does not only serve to refresh but also to REFUEL. Drink coffee (preferably black) if you like that kind of thing. Yet, do not forget that liquids alone do not suffice at providing nutrition to your body (not to mention that it may be unwise to drink coffee on an empty stomach). Have easy-to-eat fruits (apples, bananas), nuts, whole-wheat bread, and other healthy (and not-so-sugary) snacks on standby. Avoid skipping essential meals like breakfast or lunch. Also keep in mind to avoid overeating or [over]indulging in unhealthy foods.

Finally, when the drowse and fatigue gets a bit unbearable, you need to RECHARGE. Do not neglect bathroom breaks. Take a 10-minute power-nap during lunch break. Do meditation before and after tasks. Engage in reading, music, and other leisurely activities during spare time. Also, at home, do not neglect your bedtime as adequate sleep is an enormous component of recharging yourself.

REINFORCE, REFRESH, REFUEL, and RECHARGE. These 4R's should help maintain a healthy body and mind, and keep you from being dormant and sedentary in the office. It would also be wise to see your doctor and adjust your health measures accordingly. After all, in the office and any other workplace setup, your greatest enemies are fatigue, procrastination, hunger and stress. Vanquish these with good healthy practices, as a healthy employee is a productive employee.