



Shape Up Your Workplace

A monthly series brought to you by Get Healthy CT

Workplace Wellness Idea #20: Healthy Work Spaces

Get Healthy CT aims to provide businesses with ideas that will facilitate healthy behaviors of their employees to improve employee satisfaction, productivity and showcase the employer as a role model for health. To support this, we will provide a “Workplace Wellness Idea” each month that employers can implement at low or no cost.

As an employer, you want your employees to be productive, but did you know that sitting for long periods of time can be harmful to their health? Sitting for long periods of time can lead to high blood pressure, high blood sugar and excess body fat. These issues can ultimately lead to decreased productivity and increased missed days of work. One way to ensure that your employees stay healthy is to promote active and healthier workspaces. In our Workplace Wellness Idea #20, we will provide you with ideas for turning your employee’s desks into spaces for health promotion stations.

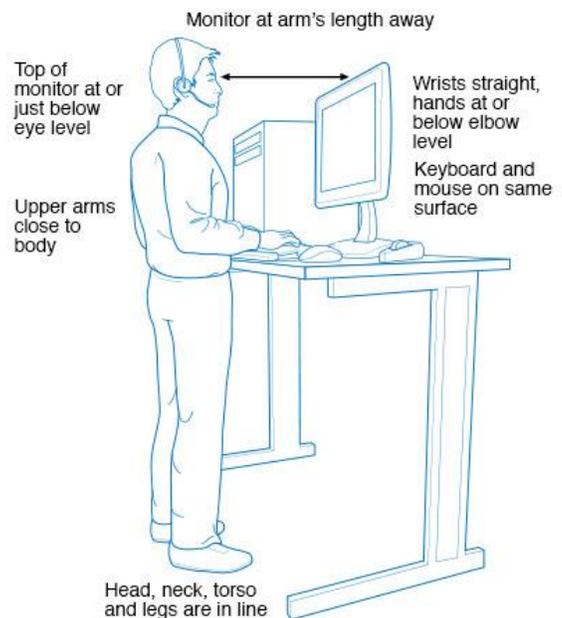
Standing Workstations

Sitting at a desk all day can be harmful to your employee’s health. Encourage them to work in the standing position for periods of time during the day.

According to the Mayo Clinic (www.mayoclinic.org), a proper standing workstation allows your employees to keep their legs, torso, neck and head approximately in line and vertical. They should use a desk that will allow them to keep your wrists straight and hands at or slightly below the level their elbows. Don't use books or boards to change the height of your desk.

REMEMBER: Standing too long can also be harmful. It is best to offer work stations that can easily adjust from the sitting to the standing position.

Proper Standing Workstation Ergonomics



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Source: www.mayoclinic.org

Portable Stair Steppers

Instead of sitting during conference calls, your employees can use portable stair steppers to get up and get active. These small machines can easily be stored under a desk when not in use and can be shared by several people.

REMEMBER: According to www.livestrong.com, it is important to use proper form to get the most from a mini stepper. Place feet flat on the pedals and keep them there as you move your legs up and down in a steady motion.



Exercise/Stability Balls

Another option for employees is to use an alternative to a standard office chair, like an exercise or stability ball. According to www.prevention.com, if used correctly, sitting on a stability ball for short periods of time can improve core strength and posture.

REMEMBER: This option may not be for everyone and does require a bit of balance. Encourage employees to switch out their regular office chair for an exercise ball for 20-30 minutes at a time.



In addition to workstation improvements, you can encourage employees to take short activity breaks during the day. One online program, Activity Bursts Everywhere (ABE), offers a free video library of short, 3-8 minute activity bursts that allow your employees to move and exercise right at their desks.

These exercise videos are organized by the setting and include standing and sitting exercises for the office, home and even waiting areas.

Depending on your fitness level, you can start doing one burst per day and then build up gradually. These not only can be used at work, but employees can also access this video library for quick activity breaks at home. See all available videos at: www.abeforfitness.com



For more information, please visit GetHealthyCT.org

Let's work together to help make the healthy choice the easy choice in the workplace!