

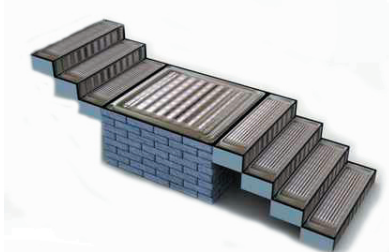
Ideas for a Healthier Workplace

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THROW HEALTHIER PARTIES

Whether it's donuts in the morning, deli platters at lunch or birthday cake in the afternoon, sometimes work gatherings can wreak havoc on your eating habits. Try having a salad potluck lunch where everyone brings one healthy ingredient to share, bring fruit salad in the morning instead of sugary snacks and order up veggie platters with great tasting dips for staff meetings.



BECOME A STAIR MASTER

Taking the stairs at work is one of the easiest ways to get more exercise every day. Start out with a couple of trips a day and work your way up to skipping the elevator altogether. If your stairwells are boring gray, consider organizing a weekend session to repaint them in bright colors and designs (with permission, of course) to encourage everyone to walk instead of ride.



START A BROWN BAG CIRCLE

Lunching out every day is not only expensive, but loads up the calories and packs on the pounds. So you don't miss the chance to gossip with your friends, start a Brown Bag Circle that pledges to pack a lunch and meet to eat. If weather permits, try lunching outside and ending your break with a walk around the block. Start out with 1 day a week and work it up from there.



KEEP YOUR AREA CLEAN

Work areas can be breeding grounds for the bacteria and dust that lead to allergies, colds & flu and other illnesses. Wash your hands regularly and make sure your work area stays clean. Try not to eat where you work to minimize mold and bacterial growth. Once a week, dust and clean up your area – encourage others to join in to make the whole place healthier.



DON'T COME TO WORK SICK

You probably won't be surprised to know that in one survey, 98% of workers said they've come to work sick. We all worry that if we stay home, our employer will get annoyed, our work won't get done and we'll just get further behind. But workers who do go to work sick have trouble concentrating, often make bad decisions, not to mention getting other people sick. It's better for everyone to stay home, get some rest and come back fully recharged.



DESKERCISE

Take a few minutes twice a day to "work it out" – with some basic stretches and exercises at your desk. Try a Shoulder Stretch – stretch your arm across your chest and use your other wrist to gently pull your arm toward your body – a great keyboard stress reliever. You can also try a Desk Press – place your hands about shoulder width apart on a counter or desk. Move your feet back until your body's at a slight angle, then flex and straighten your arms.



THINK ABOUT ERGONOMICS

No two people work the same way. The chair that you can't live without may make the guy in the next cubicle ache. Listen to your body. If you suffer aches and pains after a day of work, you're probably not in the right position. If you find yourself getting headaches, maybe you need better light. Work with your manager and coworkers to make sure everyone is comfortable and can be at their best.



GREEN UP YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Spruce up your work area with a plant. Placing small potted plants in work areas can improve air quality and restore moisture to air that's dry. According to www.care2.com (a green living website), the best plants to use are the areca palm, reed palm dwarf date palm, boston fern, Janet Craig dracaena, English ivy, Australian sword fern, peace lily, rubber plant and the weeping fig.