



8 simple ways to help employees “sneak in” physical activity during the workday

Sneak It In is all about squeezing in small bouts of physical activity during the workday.

Although work situations differ across organizations, one thing is true: movement will help your employees be their happiest and most productive. To reap benefits such as boosted **mood** and increased **energy, focus** and **productivity**, encourage employees working in office settings and from home to **move for three to four minutes every hour**. For those who work on their feet, stretching, picking up the pace or taking the longer route to the washroom, kitchen or breakroom all count! A more active day is within reach, and it starts with employers like you!

Here are some ways to help your employees “sneak in” physical activity:



1 **Create policies that support physical activity:** Offer flexible work hours, opportunities to work from home and dress codes that allow employees to wear comfortable clothing and footwear.



2 **Encourage and enable active transportation:** Offer incentives for employees who walk, wheel, cycle or take public transit to get to work and provide bicycle racks, showers and changing facilities with lockers or cubbies.



3 **Place visible cues or reminders:** Nudge employees to sneak more physical activity into their days with cues such as a sign beside the elevator encouraging employees to take the stairs or a map highlighting nearby walking destinations.



4 **Offer an environment that permits a more active day:** For example, convert unused areas of your workplace into exercise spaces and/or places to store exercise equipment, yoga mats, workout clothes and other active gear. Consider providing adjustable standing desks, treadmill desks, under-desk exercise bikes and/or stability balls for your employees.



5 **Promote and permit short active breaks and on-the-move meetings,** especially one-on-ones, small group discussions and phone calls, throughout the workday. If this isn't possible and meetings are scheduled for more than an hour, encourage two-minute, mid-meeting fit breaks.



6 **Use active icebreaker games or interactive group tasks** during staff training sessions that get employees moving while enhancing group dynamics.



7 **Nominate a few employees to be “active champions”** who are responsible for tasks like leading fit breaks, setting timers during meetings that remind employees to move or organizing lunchtime walks, workouts or yoga sessions.



8 **Try to model the behaviours you want to see reflected by your employees.** Encourage leaders and managers to join in. When your colleagues see you taking meetings on the move, actively commuting and prioritizing movement, chances are they'll follow suit.