



HEALTH & SAFETY BULLETIN

Sedentary workers: Reducing the risk

Who needs to read this?

All staff

Background

Sitting for long periods of time without standing up, stretching out and moving your body may be a serious health risk.

A sedentary working day is when workers spend most of their day sitting down eg: office-based work, and therefore do not undertake sufficient amounts of physical activity. Sedentary working days can have adverse health effects on workers and can lead to short term effects such as musculoskeletal discomfort, injuries or reduced concentration or potential serious health issues such as diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular disease.

Tips to reduce the risks of sedentary work

Use these tips to help sedentary workers avoid long-term health issues caused by insufficient movement throughout their working day:

- Encourage workers to alternate between computer work and a variety of other tasks where possible.
- Take regular breaks during daily activities, e.g. take a break every half hour to stand up when undertaking typing and other repetitive activities, stretch and leave your desk during lunch breaks, arrange to take short breaks during prolonged sit-down meetings.
- Take advantage of situations throughout the day when standing and moving is possible, e.g. take the stairs rather than the lift, stand up whilst talking on the phone.
- If possible, change the working environment and task design to promote workers to stand and move around more often.
- Encourage a working environment where there is open discussion about the best ways to promote less sitting and more movement.

Queries - If you have any queries regarding this bulletin, please contact Health and Safety on 9266 4900 or email healthandsafety@curtin.edu.au.

For advice related to Ergonomics email ergonomics@curtin.edu.au