

## Replacing two minutes of sitting with walking each hour was associated with a 33% lower risk of an early death



**when you sit too much ...** Your leg and back muscles don't contract much. This can slow the clearance of fat and sugar from your blood, increasing the chance that these molecules will be stored as body fat or clog the arteries.

### **Our take**

Always adventurous when it comes to trying things that claim they'll make her healthier, our sales and operations manager, Robyn Taylor, agreed to a month-long stint with the locally made DeskStand (*Deskstand.co*). She stood while working on her laptop and sat while doing tasks like filing, spending about six hours on her feet each day (on days when she was on the road or overexerted herself at the gym, she sat longer).

A week in, Robyn noticed that her posture was better. While standing, her keyboard was at just the right height, which stopped her usual slouching. She also no longer experienced the pain in her shoulder that used to strike within a few hours of working at her old desk.

Robyn's verdict: "My energy levels and focus increased while I was working standing up, which made

me more productive. I'm keeping the sit-stand desk!"

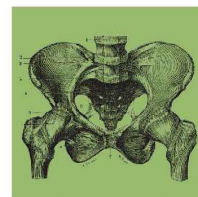
### **On the ball**

*As we look for new ways to keep our muscles active while we're stuck at our desks, old tactics have made a comeback, like the fitness-ball-as-chair craze. But research suggests that these balls might not be the core-strengthening, posture-perfecting wonders we'd hoped for. Although some studies show that sitting on a fitness ball activates our muscles and improves back pain, others have found possible drawbacks. Replacing your chair with a fitness ball may increase your risk of lower back pain, and the unstable nature of the balls can set you up for injury, say University of Waterloo researchers. To minimise the chance that you'll want to burst your new seat in frustration, follow these two guidelines: use a ball that's the right size for you (you should be able to sit with your feet flat*

*on the floor, your hips and knees bent at a 90° angle) and ease into your new sitting arrangement (only sit on the ball for as long as is comfortable; increase the time as your body gets used to this new way of sitting).*

### **Movers and shakers**

*15 desk-free jobs that don't need a degree: photographer, tour guide, chef, landscaper, hairdresser, masseuse, fashion designer, makeup artist, florist, event planner, fitness instructor, life coach, blogger, professional dancer, flight attendant.*



**when you sit too much ...** Your hip flexor and hamstring muscles shorten, making standing more difficult and increasing your risk of fitness injuries.

References available on request