

Tips for a healthy, stress-free work day

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MANY of us spend a large portion of our day at work. Long periods of sitting, stress and computer work can take a toll on our bodies. However, there are a number of key areas that if changed are sure to give you a new lease on life. Follow these seven tips and improve your levels of health, productivity and happiness.

IMPROVE YOUR POSTURE

Your sitting position is crucial for the health of your brain and body. For every centimetre your head drops forward, the stress on your spine multiplies by a factor of 10. This can cause neck pain, headaches and constant shoulder stiffness. If slouching is your natural position it may mean you have a mechanical problem in your spine that should be corrected. Getting checked by a chiropractor who specialises in postural correction is recommended.

GET UP AND MOVE

When you sit for hours without getting up, do you find yourself feeling refreshed and rested at the end of the day, or tired and lethargic? When we have spent all day sitting, most of us feel like our battery has lost charge, which is exactly what is happening as movement charges the brain.

Did you know that we sit for about 32 years of our lives, resulting in the fact that we are all severely deficient in movement? The health consequences of this have led some scientists to call sitting "the new smoking". By moving more, your physical and mental performance improves.

STAY HYDRATED

The lull we feel at around 3 pm is often dehydration. Drink at least two litres of water per day and you may not need that second cup of coffee.

EAT REAL FOOD

Eating food in its natural state will ensure your body is getting all the nutrients it needs and will also assist in reducing your body's toxic load. Food is not just a fuel to keep you going, it is what your body uses in all its chemical processes. If your food comes in a box or has ingredients you can't pronounce, it's probably best to stay away.

BREATHE DEEPLY

Breathing properly is one of the pillars of health. Stress causes us to breathe shallowly, depriving us of oxygen. Spend five minutes twice a day breathing in for five seconds and then out for five seconds. This breathing exercise has been shown to enhance the body's ability to cope with stress.

DO AWAY WITH MULTITASKING

Technology forces us to multitask, but our brains are not wired to do this. Multitasking causes stress. Use a to-do list and concentrate deeply on one task at a time. This will make you more efficient and healthier.

BE GRATEFUL

Being grateful is not about ignoring the challenges in your life. It's about taking the time to focus on what is going well. This small change in mind-set will have a drastic effect on your quality of life.

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