



Working out while at work

BY DR. JULIE T. CHEN

My work hours are super long. How can I prevent the holiday weight gain that usually happens this time of the year!

MOST of us don't have the luxury of dedicating our every waking hour to exercise. Instead, we find ourselves mostly behind our desks from nine to five, five days a week, trying to figure out how to fit in the time for grocery shopping and running errands, never mind finding time for exercise.

But, it is possible. Here are some examples of how I've seen some employees fit exercise into their day.

One employee wanted to lose weight. She was only able to get to her personal trainer once or twice per week, so she started coming up with creative ways to implement strengthening exercise opportunities into her work space.

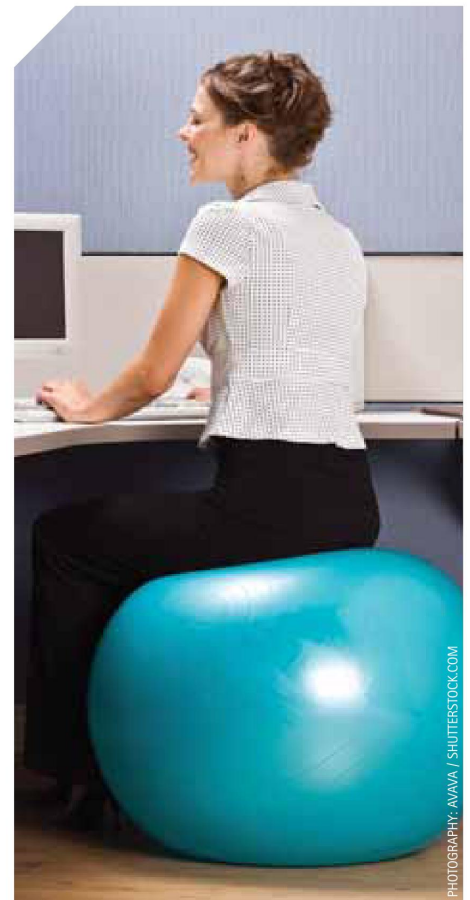
For starters, she replaced her chair with a stability ball. After a few weeks, her personal trainer noticed that her core strength had significantly improved. Second, she brought light hand weights and ankle weights into her work cubicle so that when she is using her phone head-set for conference calls, she could do light strength training with her legs and her arms while she was working.

Even if you didn't have a balance ball for a chair, you can do gluteal squeezes while sitting at your desk. You can perform these every hour or two or you can stand up and stretch and do some squats or lunges.

Besides strength training, many employees make it a priority to find time to incorporate cardio exercises into their work day. Some of them take the stairs instead of the elevators and park farther away from their building in order to fit in some extra cardio. You can also try adding more steps into your work day by walking to your colleague's office for discussions rather than calling him on the phone. Consider asking your colleagues to form a walking group at lunch time. These activities not only help you to tone up and become lean, but they are great stress relievers as well.

When you set your mind to it, you can always find some method for incorporating activity into your work day. This way, if you end up working late on any given day, you don't have to feel as defeated about missing that gym class. And since all those exercises at the office help to relieve tension and anxiety, you might just find yourself going home that day feeling stress free and a little lighter on your feet.

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Ways to work out at work:

- » Switch up your stiff armchair for a stability ball.
- » Fasten ankle weights to your legs or bring in small, light handheld weights that you can lift while using your phone's head-set.
- » Take frequent breaks away from your desk to stretch. Do some lunges or squats, as neither requires a lot of space.
- » Take the stairs.
- » Form a walking group at lunch time. **Z**

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