

Get active

Signs that inactivity may be an issue at your workplace:

Sitting during most of the work day

Often eating lunch at desks and skipping breaks

Working long shifts

Workstations are not ergonomically adjusted

Regular exercise can improve health and mood, and even reduce the risk of some cancers, while strengthening bones and muscles. Physically active workers are less prone to absenteeism, as well as to strains and sprains. They are also more alert and more likely to be engaged in the task at hand.

Supporting employees as they seek to become more physically active can decrease the risk of injuries while boosting morale. Here's what has worked well at other organizations:

Provide safe and interesting places to walk or move. Check parking lots and stairways for uneven surfaces, clutter, and poor lighting. Provide onsite bike/skateboard storage and shower facilities to promote active commuting. Furnish an on-site gym. Map safe local walking routes.

Evaluate workstations to ensure neutral postures. Consider adding adjustable height workstations.

Make sure schedules are flexible and staffing is adequate to allow for quick walking breaks or a workout during the work day. Encourage walking meetings. Ensure employees are taking breaks and lunches.

Consider incentives for those who walk or bike to work. Challenge employees to use the stairs. Subsidize gym memberships for employees and families if you don't have space for an on-site gym, or consider sponsoring athletic events and teams.

Issue pedometers so employees know how much physical activity they're getting. Provide reflective clothing and gear so they can walk safely in the dark.

Share employee success stories to motivate others while reinforcing positive physical activity.

Ask your workers for more ideas for increasing physical activity during the work day.

For more information, including guides on other workplace health and safety topics, visit: saif.com/twh.

