

# York University Staff Association Health and Wellness

## News and Views

Work days have their challenges from deadlines to meetings to conference calls; however, staying happy healthy and fit shouldn't be one of them. On average, Canadian workers spend about 60% of their waking hours at work. What happens in the workplace can have a huge impact on an employee's overall health. A healthy workplace is a place where we have strong and supportive working relationships, and where we are encouraged to look after our own health both at work and at home. Being healthy and feeling well at work is about more than just not being sick. To be truly healthy you need to take personal responsibility for your own physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

Your workplace probably feels like your second home. It's a place where relationships are created, where learning occurs, and where we make a contribution to one another's lives. So why not make that contribution a positive one. **Think fun!** – Having a positive attitude about everything you do just naturally brings 'fun' to every interaction or task. And, a positive attitude is infectious. People like positive people. They're automatically drawn to a pleasant and upbeat demeanor. Your business and personal relationships will definitely improve when you employ a positive attitude.

It has been found that people's overall mood improves significantly if they incorporate exercise into their workday. While office jobs have their challenges when it comes to mobility, there are still ways to incorporate exercise into a workplace environment without ever hitting a gym. Sit on a stability ball instead of an office chair. Even just for an hour a day. Both your core strength and posture will improve. If you drop your pen, do a crunch instead of bending over to pick it up. ☺

Use your break periods for de-stressing with some form of fitness. Allow your legs to move when you get a chance. Take the stairs instead of the elevator on your way to your next meeting. If you only have a few minutes try some gentle stretches that can be done at your desk. Pull your chin toward your chest until you feel a stretch along the back of your neck or slowly bring your shoulders up toward your ears and then roll them back down again. Try anything to be more active throughout the work day.

Ever get tired of those dull board room walls. Step outside them and go for a walking meeting with your coworkers.

Not only will you all get a little exercise, but the change of scenery is often beneficial to creative thinking and brainstorming.



Lunch hour can prove to be hazardous, whether it's the lunch time meeting at the great Italian place across the street or the nearest fast food joint. Save yourself some cash and some calories by packing your own healthy lunch. With the time you save why not organize a lunchtime walking group with your coworkers. I am sure you are not the only one trying to make healthy choices; you might as well surround yourself with people who are ready to lace up their walking shoes and hold each other accountable. In-office weight loss challenges have always proven to be successful. This is a great team building activity for employees. I know of a few ladies here at York, who put together their own office weight loss challenge, with great success! We can all encourage each other to stay healthy. The truth is no-one achieves much if they work entirely alone. By allowing others to help, you not only increase your chances of success, you also reinforce your relationship with them.

Finally I must focus on YUSA's very own fitness initiative right here at York University. One that is very near and dear to my heart. We are very fortunate to have YUSA's **free** lunchtime fitness program. This program offers workout classes for all fitness levels. It is a program made up of yoga/pilates, cardio and strength training. I encourage members to come out and give it a try. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet amazing people, have some fun, and do some good for your health. So next lunch hour when you find yourself just sitting at your desk come check it out.

For more information on Yusa's fitness program, please email Kerriane Brown at [kerribr@yorku.ca](mailto:kerribr@yorku.ca)

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