

Living Right[®]

Your Health and Wellness Awareness Bulletin

September 2017



Get up and get moving to improve your health

Getting enough exercise can be a challenge, especially if your job doesn't require you to leave the comfort of your desk chair.

It's important to make movement a priority, however. Physical activity lowers your risk for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some cancers. In addition, it decreases your chances of becoming depressed and helps you sleep well at night.



To make exercise something you look forward to, put the ideas below into action. If you're just starting to exercise, begin slowly and consult your doctor if you have any medical concerns.

- **Make it easy:** Walk around your neighborhood. Join a gym that's close to home, or buy a few weights, an exercise ball, or treadmill to use at home.
- **Think back:** Revive activities you enjoyed doing as a child, such as biking, tennis, or swimming.
- **Enjoy a group activity:** Go for a jog with a friend, or go to a yoga class with a coworker. Rather than going out to eat with friends, go for a hike at a local park or walk through a botanical garden.
- **Try something new:** Take a dance class, or learn how to golf or surf.

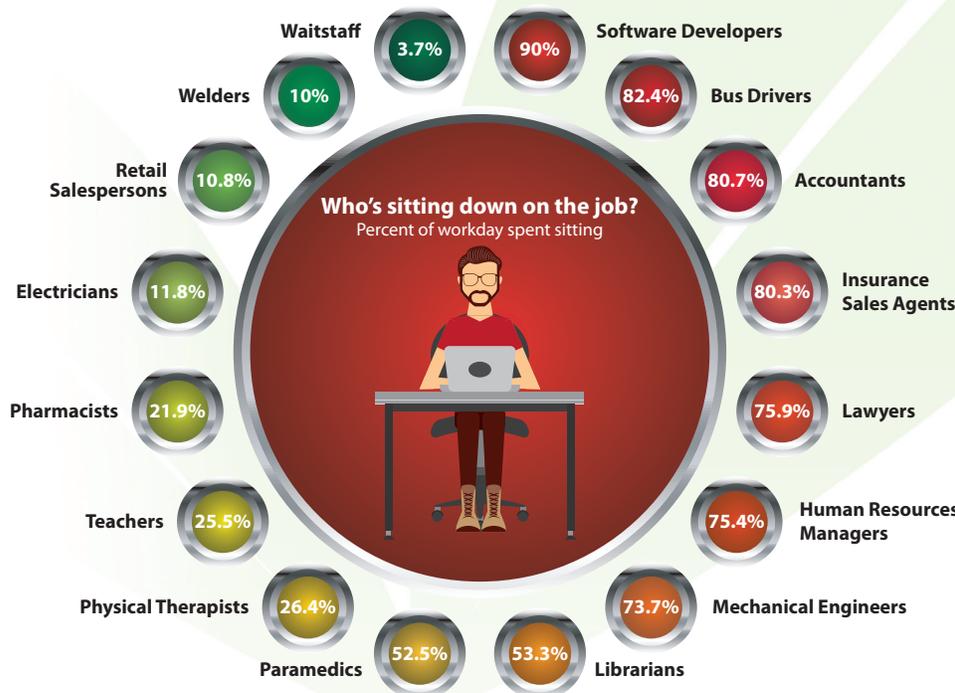
Make exercise a family affair

Activities that involve mom, dad, and the kids strengthen family bonds at the same time they improve physical health.

Family activities give parents and kids an opportunity to communicate with each other as they build strong bones and muscles. In addition, parents who exercise are setting a great example by making good health a priority.

To combine family time with physical activity:

- Go for a bike ride or walk after work.
- Work on some dance moves together.
- Play disc golf, volleyball, or badminton.
- Go bowling or try miniature golf.
- Pick up a basketball and have a free throw contest or game of H-O-R-S-E.
- Time the kids to see how long it takes them to run around the house, and then have them time you (take it easy if you're not used to being active!).
- Take an active vacation at a national park and enjoy the hiking trails.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

By the numbers

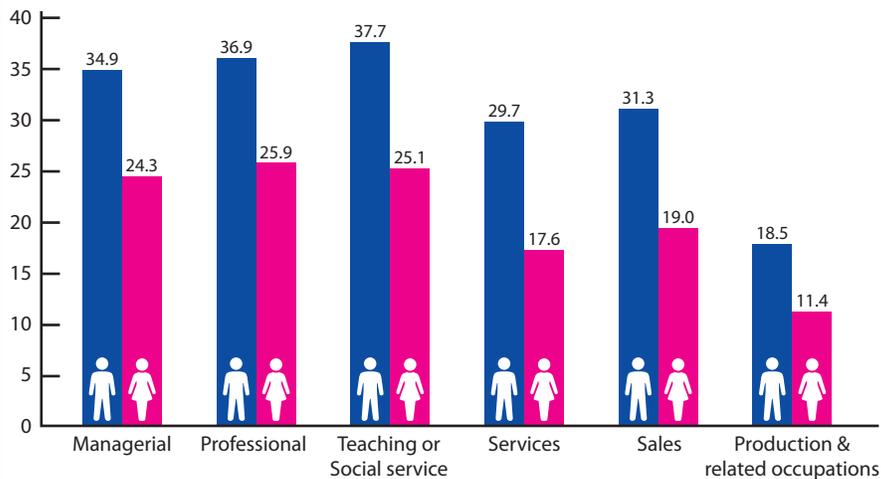
49 percent of adults meet the aerobic physical activity guidelines from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

21 percent of adults meet the federal guidelines for aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities.



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Percent of U.S. workers meeting physical activity guidelines



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey, 2008–2014.

How much exercise do I need?

For substantial health benefits, the 2008 physical activity guidelines from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommend that adults perform at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week, or 75 minutes per week of vigorous physical activity.

In addition, adults should do muscle-strengthening activities two or more days per week. This can involve lifting weights, doing push-ups, working with resistance bands, or practicing yoga.



Exercise benefits bone health



Exercise is “amazing” for bones, according to the lead author of a study that used mice to look at the impact running makes on bone health.

Researchers from the University of North Carolina School of Medicine found that exercising burns the fat found within bone marrow. Their study, published in the *Journal of Bone and Mineral Research*, also found evidence that this process improves bone quality and the amount of bone.

“I see a lot of patients with poor bone health, and I always talk to them about what a dramatic effect exercise can have on bones, regardless of what the cause of their bone condition is,” said Dr. Maya Styner the study’s lead author and an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

While obesity may increase a bone’s fat depot – a site in the body where fat is stored – exercise can diminish it.

“Exercise is able to reduce the size of this fat depot and burn it for fuel and at the same time build stronger, larger bones,” Styner said.

Overcome fitness barriers and move while at work

A recent CareerBuilder survey found that 56 percent of workers in the United States believe they’re overweight, and 45 percent say they’ve put on pounds at their present job.

Sedentary jobs, fatigue caused by work, and a lack of time for exercise were some of the activity barriers that workers said contributed to weight gain. To overcome those exercise obstacles, make working out a priority and blend movement into your day:

- Ride your bike to work, or get off the bus or subway a stop early and walk the rest of the way. If you drive, park in the last row.
- Take the stairs whenever possible, and stand during phone calls.
- Take a 10-minute walk before work, at lunchtime, and after work.
- Exercise before work, or treat an exercise class like an appointment or meeting you can’t miss.



Good news: More people are walking for their health

Walking is a great way to put activity into your day, and more people are taking advantage of this simple and effective exercise.

In June, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that the proportion of men and women who walk for fun or as a mode of transportation increased between 2005 and 2015.

In 2015, 65.1 percent of women and 62.8 percent of men reported walking in the past week. In 2005, 57.3 percent of women and 54.3 percent of men said they had done so.



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