



A good stretch is one of the best ways to relieve tension in the body and increase your energy level.

BODY TALK *Continued*

you stretch during your busy workday. Each movement should be performed in sets of 10 repetitions. Keys to the stretches are keeping the muscles hydrated by drinking water throughout the day, maintaining good posture, staying relaxed, stretching without straining, contracting abdominal muscles and remembering to breathe.

To stretch chest muscles, Atlanta-based personal trainer Rod Johnson recommends that you sit toward the edge of your chair facing forward. Extend your arms back, holding onto the middle of the chair with your chest lifted. Don't lock your elbows. Keep your chin off your chest.

The pectoral muscles feel the stretch when you stand facing a corner with your hands and forearms pushing against two adja-

cent walls, suggests physical therapist Edward Lee of Silver Spring, Md.

The back muscles should be stretched, too, because they support all body movements. One way to stretch and strengthen the back, says Lee, is holding your hands on your hips while trying to squeeze your elbows together behind you.

Sitting or standing, shoulders can be stretched with a movement that resembles a shrug. Lift your shoulders and hold them in this position for 15 seconds. Release your shoulders and repeat the movement.

With the help of your arms, you can give your neck a good stretch. Lift your left arm straight up and lean your head to the left, keeping your eyes forward. Let your left hand rest on your right ear. Switch sides and repeat this stretch.

Doing waist stretches at your desk might not give you a bodybuilder's six-pack, but it will help work abdominal muscles that tend to sag over time from inactivity, says Johnson, a health producer for *CNN Headline News*. While sitting or standing, put your left hand on your right shoulder and slowly twist your torso from right to left. Repeat the motion with your right hand on your left shoulder.

After sitting for most of the day, your hips need stretching. One movement for hips, Johnson says, is to repeat the motion of standing in front of a chair and squatting over the seat as if you're going to sit.

If you can't leave your desk because you're on the phone or the computer, there are other ways to stretch, including crouching or walking in place. Using a

headset or a long phone cord gives more flexibility to move around the office.

WALKING

When you can get off the phone or pull away from your computer, take a break by walking the hall or looking out of a window, says Dr. Kevin Flythe, a chiropractor in Marietta, Ga. "It will take your mind away from what you were doing," he says.

Exercising can start on your way to work. If it's safe to do so, park farther away from the building than you need to so you'll get a chance to walk more than you normally would. Once inside, take the stairs instead of riding the elevator. Depending on which floor you work on, you might want to take the elevator part of the way and the stairs the rest of the way.

Additionally, try having meetings on the move. Go walking or jogging with co-workers to discuss business instead of sitting around a conference room table.

If you get an hour for lunch and don't take that long to eat, go for a walk during the rest of your break.

Walking is also good inside the workplace. Instead of calling a co-worker or sending an e-mail, walk over to deliver the message.

And don't always use the closest restroom. Take the stairs to use one on a different floor.

With all of this walking, you'll want to keep track of the number of steps you've taken by wearing a pedometer. In a good day you should take close to 10,000 steps before your workday is done.

News producer Eaglin uses her almost two-mile walk back to the train after work to unwind. Sometimes she walks in the rain, even turning down offers for rides from co-workers. "Walking is relaxing after being at a stressful news