

Est.  
2007

YSJActive

**3**

**Every**

**30**

**Move for 3 minutes,  
every 30 minutes to  
limit the health damage  
caused by sitting**

3 every 30 aims to get us all moving for 3 minutes, every 30 minutes. Why? Research highlights that sitting for long periods of time is damaging to our health, but so many of us have to sit due to our jobs, studying, hobbies and/or commuting. Regular movement breaks of just 3 minutes every 30 minutes can help to limit the damage caused to our health from sitting.

Sitting a lot (over-sitting) can result in health issues, regardless of health status, such as difficulties managing our blood sugar levels, processing body fat and controlling our blood pressure. It is also linked to the development of type 2 diabetes, obesity and cancer. Our organs such as our bowels and cardiovascular system work more effectively when we are upright. When we sit our bowels become compressed, slowing down digestion, which can cause constipation, bloating and heartburn. Our lungs can also become compressed reducing their capacity, so we are unable to take in as much oxygen as we would if we were standing. This may make us feel tired and unable to concentrate, as well as causing a decrease in 'feel good' hormones and brain function.

Over-sitting can also contribute to the development of mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and decreased motivation.

The more hours we sit per day the higher the risk of developing sitting related health conditions. The following from [juststand.org](http://juststand.org) shows the different risk categories for the number of hours spent sitting:

Low risk = less than 4 hours per day

Medium risk = 4 to 8 hours per day

High risk = 8 to 11 hours per day

Very high risk = more than 11 hours per day

However, taking a movement break every 30 minutes for at least 3 minutes is said to limit the damage over-sitting can cause. Research showed participants who moved more than 75 steps in their movement breaks had the best health results.

It can be hard to take regular movement breaks when we are busy, but the following may help:

Standing up (and moving if possible) when on the phone

Having walking meetings

Using a standing desk

Going to a loo that is further away, or better still upstairs

Taking the stairs instead of the lift

Going to see someone in person rather than sending an email or calling

Refilling your water bottle regularly (movement and hydration – win win)

Taking an active lunch break and going for a walk  
Active commuting

Performing an exercise before you sit down in your chair, such as 5 squats or 10 jumping jacks

Setting reminders to move, or wearing a fitness tracker that alerts you to move can be helpful. Some people find the Pomodoro method a really helpful way of getting their work done. With this method you work for 25 minutes (with no breaks or distractions) then you take a 5-minute break. After 3 or 4 blocks you take a longer break. If you're doing this method why not make your 5-minute break a movement break?

So, let's all take our movement breaks, not only are they good for our health, they also benefit our productivity.

See the webpage below for some ideas on how to increase your movement.

**[www.yorks.ac.uk/ysjactive/campaigns](http://www.yorks.ac.uk/ysjactive/campaigns)**