

Move your 'but', then move your 'butt'

Stop making excuses and exercise – Move your body daily.

How many New Year resolutions did you make this year? Focusing on fitness and health made it into the top ten most common New Year's resolutions with only spending time with family and friends to beat it. When we did some research with GU Health 2 years ago 76% of people said that they would exercise each day and yet the reality was that only 22% really did and 71% said that it was a lack of time that stopped them from doing it.

A lack of physical activity drains your body of energy. Sitting at your desk all day hunched over your computer and sliding further into your chair as the day progresses results in heavy legs, a tight lower back and a numb bum! There are very good reasons for exercising that have nothing at all to do with looking good naked! There are mental and emotional benefits, including improved self-esteem, psychological wellbeing and elevated moods that help us to perform at our best and cope better during stressful times.

The Catch-22 is that when we do get busy and stressed one of the first things we drop from our schedules is our daily exercise. You've been in this situation before: you plan to exercise in the morning, but when you wake up your mind is racing with everything that you have to do that day and you can't spare the time or the mental energy to exercise. You pack your gym bag and make a deal with yourself that you'll do something after work, but in reality you know you'll be too tired and tomorrow you'll probably sleep in a little...so what's the alternative?

Go with the ten-minute lunchtime workout. I know you'll probably be grabbing lunch at your desk, but you can find ten minutes. So many people are working ten, twelve or even more hours per day without a significant break, and they're sacrificing their exercise and relaxation time to do it, so it's time to bring your workout into the workplace. Here are three simple exercises that will help you to recharge your body and handle the exercise dilemma at the same time.

Wall push-ups – push-ups are an excellent exercise that uses your entire upper body. If you haven't done a push-up for a few years you might find floor push-ups a real challenge, and besides if you're all dressed up for work, you don't want to go lying on the floor. So wall push-ups are the answer.

Stand about an arm's length from the wall. Put your arms on the wall, shoulder width apart. Stand straight, feet flat on the floor, tuck in your stomach and hold your chest up. Keep your body straight and lower yourself to do a push-up against the wall. The slower you go, the faster you will tone your muscles. If you find this too easy, bring your hands closer together for more of a challenge. When you can do three sets of ten push-ups on the wall with your hands close together, you will be able to do floor push-ups, lifting your own body weight. When you progress to these, start with knee push-ups (sometimes known as 'ladies' push-ups) before trying full push-ups.

Squats – are excellent for toning the front and back of your legs and your buttocks.

Stand facing your desk, move your chair back so that it is a little behind you and take off your shoes if you are wearing heels. Stand tall with your feet shoulder width apart, then keeping your back straight, push your bottom out while keeping your chest up. Squat slowly down in this position until your bottom just touches the chair (do not sit down), then slowly stand up straight again. Breathe in as you descend and breathe out as you come up. The objective of a squat is to push your bottom out, keeping your knees over your toes. If you

have ever been skiing, just think of that position. Three sets of ten of these and you will start to reshape your lower body and build strong bones.

Computer curls – you can do these at home in front of the television or at work in front of your computer. Your biceps are the muscles at the front of your upper arms, you can exercise them by doing alternating or simultaneous curls. You'll need a small hand weight, if you don't have a dumbbell, a can of food works well.

To begin, sit up straight in your chair or stand. Keep your elbows tucked into your sides as you slowly raise the weights up toward your shoulders. Keep your palms facing your shoulders at all times. You are going for low-weight, high-repetition with this exercise. Five minutes of these helps to tone your muscles and release computer-tired shoulders.

Remember with exercise it is quality over quantity. And with weight bearing exercise like the three above the slower you go the faster you build muscle.

More muscle in your body = less fat in your body.
Anyone for more muscle?