

## On-the-job stress relief

July 16 2018, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter

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(HealthDay)—You've probably heard the health warning: Sitting is the new smoking.

The importance of getting up and walking to prevent serious [health issues](#) when you sit at a desk all day long has gotten a lot of attention recently.

Those [health risks](#) include increased blood pressure, [high blood sugar](#), [excess weight](#) and [high cholesterol levels](#), all of which may increase the risk of death from [heart disease](#) and cancer.

Now, research points to even more benefits from taking a workday walk: boosting your mood and relieving job stress.

One series of studies used participants' feedback to tell researchers how exercise affected them. The workers took three 30-minute group walks at lunchtime each week for 10 weeks. On two random days each week, they completed a morning and an afternoon cellphone report.

When researchers analyzed the results, they found that, on the afternoons following a walk, the participants were less tense, more enthusiastic and better able to cope, compared to afternoons on days they hadn't walked. As a bonus, the workers showed gains in aerobic fitness and other measures of health at the end of the study.

Another study found that taking daily 15-minute walks in a park during lunch hour led to better concentration and less fatigue in the afternoon. And the benefits were seen almost immediately.

As a bonus—if you can take a daily 30-minute walk, you'll also achieve the national guideline goal of 150 minutes of exercise per week.

And you don't need an official worksite program to reap these benefits: just put on walking shoes and go. Of course, there's more fun in numbers, so you might want to band with a group of coworkers and bond as you de-stress.

What's more, you'll provide motivation for each other to stick with the program.

**More information:** The American Heart Association has everything you need to [start a walking program](#) at work as well as in your community.

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