

Script – Print - Standing Up for Better Health

The benefits of using a standing desk

Type-click-stand-click-type-sit-type-stand-click. Sounds like exercise. Actually, it is and can result in health benefits like any daily activity that gets your body moving.

Just ask anyone who uses a standing desk. Those are the ergonomic workstations popping up all over the place that allows you to adjust your computer keyboard and screen so you can sit, stand or something in-between.

All of us can agree that a sedentary lifestyle is not good for our long term health. But, what can a little standing during our typical eight hour work day actually accomplish? Plenty.

Dr. Mohammed Mudasser Khan, family medicine physician for OSF HealthCare Medical Group, says in the two years he's used his standing desk set-up he has more energy and is less fatigued at the end of the day.

"And it's good for the posture," says Dr. Mohammed Mudasser Khan, family medicine physician for OSF HealthCare Medical Group. "It make me feel a little bit more active. And last, but not least, I think I'm slightly more productive in my work compared to when I used to sit all the time."

Additionally, studies are showing using a standing desk may lower your risk for heart disease, weight gain and obesity. It may also lower blood sugar levels and improve your mood.

However, Dr. Khan advises that a combination of standing and sitting at your work station would be best.

"Because when you stand for so long, constantly, blood starts to pool in your legs," says Dr. Mohammed Mudasser Khan, family medicine physician for OSF HealthCare Medical Group. "And when blood starts to pool in your legs, your blood pressure might drop a little bit and then, when you start to walk, you might feel some cramp in your knee and things like that. So, if you see my example, I stand for fifteen minutes and then I go and sit down with a patient and I'm walking - and then I come back and stand and then I sit in the room. So, I'm getting a healthy combination. So, either stand for a half hour and walk for a couple minutes or sit down for a half hour or an hour a time is fine too."

Too much standing, says Dr. Khan, could lead to varicose veins and problems with your feet - like planters fasciitis. Then again, you shouldn't sit all day either.

Bottom line - like anything else - when it comes to any exercise, even at your desk, find the routine that works best for you and consult your physician.