



Aletha  
WARD

Building your *W*health

## Creating *W*health at Work

SHIFT YOUR FOCUS  
CREATE YOUR ENVIRONMENT  
BUILD YOUR *W*health

[WWW.ALETHAWARD.COM](http://WWW.ALETHAWARD.COM)



# INTRODUCTION

Sitting is the new smoking. That is what the research is now telling us. Sitting for over six hours per day is linked to an increase in Type 2 Diabetes, heart Disease, Stroke and Obesity – all leading to a shorter life expectancy. It is also linked to poorer mental health. It can be very difficult however to move and not ‘sit’ when we work from a desk all day. So how can we move more and create Whealth in the workplace?

Whether you are working from home or an office, below are some tips to sit less and move more:

*“Create your environment to make it easy to make healthy choices. At work, at home and at play.”*

*- Dr Aletha Ward*

# Stepping it Out

## Step Tracker

Most mobile phones now have a health app (or you can download one to your phone) that tracks your steps. In an office environment, aim for a minimum of 8,000 steps per day. You may need to supplement your steps at work with a thirty minute walk in the morning or evening at home, however you will find if you adopt some of the suggestions below, you will increase your steps in no time!

## Comfortable Shoes

It sounds super simple, however research has demonstrated that if you have uncomfortable shoes on, you are less likely to stand and walk. Having comfortable shoes makes it easy and enjoyable to keep moving. Wear comfortable shoes, or if you need to have high heels, take them with you and pop them on when needed. Have a pair of runners handy for those sneaky walks you can fit in at work.

## Non-Direct routes

Much like going to a toilet that is not close to you, take the non-direct route to your next meeting or to the café for lunch. Leave five minutes earlier and go for a walk around the block on your way to your next meeting or go for a walk into the garden if you are working from home. Aim for this five minute break between each meeting.

## Toilet breaks

We will usually go to a toilet that is closest to us. However, try and go to a toilet that is further away. That is on another floor, or better still, in another building. This will increase your steps without too much effort.

## Walking meetings

Try walking when catching up or meeting with colleagues. Research actually shows that walking meetings is not only good for your health, but it gets your creative juices flowing!

## Take the stairs

Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Simple. It increases your cardiovascular health (think heart disease, stroke) and is a simple swap in your workday. The incline of the stairs adds to the effects of this physical activity – burning more calories and giving you better heart and lung fitness.

# Turn your desk into a fitness station

Create opportunities for fitness at your desk and in your office.

## Stand up desk

A stand-up desk is excellent to not sit for hours at a time, however it is also important to change positions regularly or this can lead to muscle stiffness and soreness (much like sitting can). It is best to alternate between sitting and standing.

## Desk bike

You can even exercise even when sitting at a desk, with a desk bike! You can alternate between your desk bike and your standing desk. It sits under your desk and you can pedal away every time you are on the phone or doing emails.

## Exercise Equipment in your office

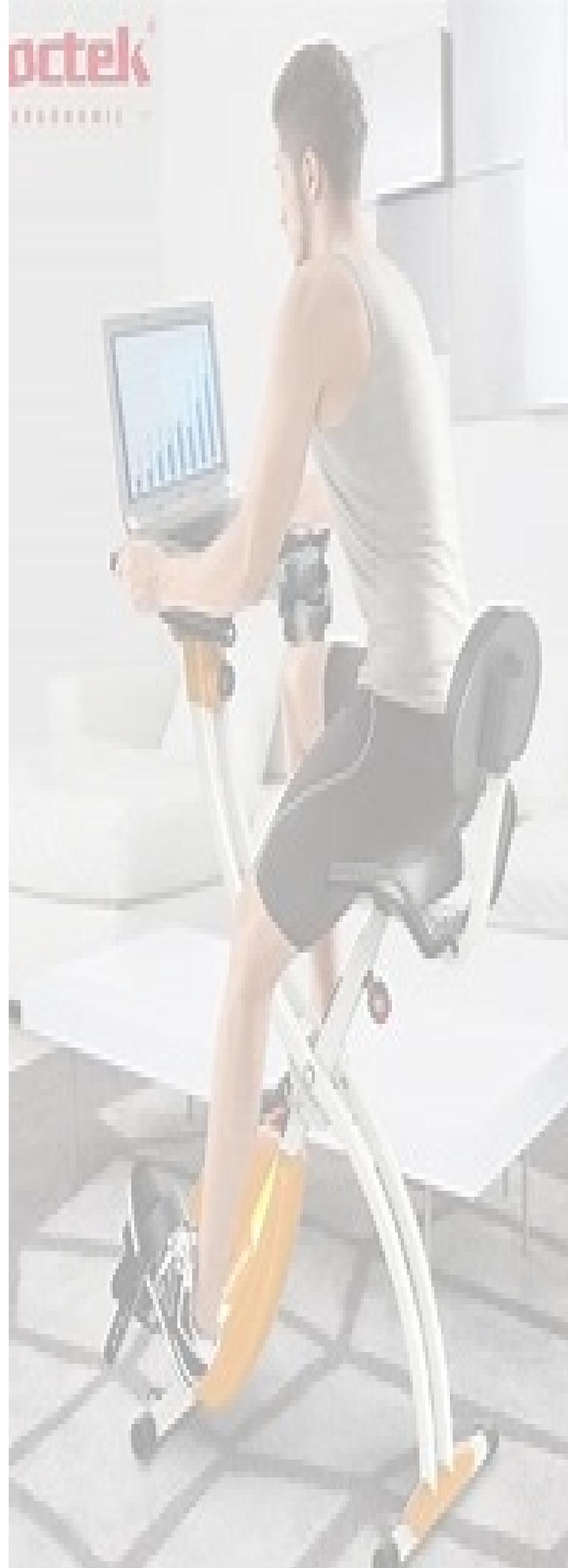
Many people will have exercise equipment in their home but not in their office. Why not try taking the treadmill that is stored under your bed into your office and each thirty minutes or between meetings do a five-minute walk on it. Keeping a spare set of runners in your office makes it super quick and simple to change your footwear and jump on a treadmill for ten minutes between meetings. You can even do your emails whilst you walk or return a work phone call.

## Set an alarm

Set an alarm for every thirty minutes and stand up, go for a walk, jump on your treadmill for five minutes or take a long non-direct route trip to the toilet or kitchen. You can also do this after every meeting has finished.

## Phone calls

Stand up when the phone rings and you are speaking on the phone. If you are on your mobile phone, walk the office whilst you talk.



# Eating well at Work

We know *Whealth* is not built with physical activity alone. Whilst increasing your physical activity around the workplace and in your office, try these simple tips and tricks to help you consume better food and drinks also.

## Drink breaks

Drink water from a smaller cup so you need to get up to refill it. Try to drink 8 small cups or 5 larger cups of water each day.

Also, do not be tempted to have a kettle in your office. Get up, take a non-direct route to a kitchen that is not close to you and grab yourself a refill!

## Lunch time

If you are buying your lunch from a café, think about what you are going to have before you get there. Already have your mind made up on a healthy option such as a salad wrap and don't even look in that hot box! OR bring your lunch from home – that way you have already decided what you will be eating. Pack salads, hummus and carrot sticks, fruit and cold bottles of water.

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**“Planning is essential. Pre-plan what you will eat for the day – your meals and your snacks, well before it is time to eat.”**

*- Dr Aletha Ward*

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