

IS IT TIME YOU STOOD UP?

Being fit, feeling and looking good isn't all hard work and achieving it doesn't need to be daunting to begin with. Exercise and eating well is what most of us strive for, but there are many little things you can do to help improve your health and fitness to begin with. Simple things, like taking the stairs instead of the escalator, or getting off the



bus one stop earlier and walking the rest of the way to work or shops. These things take a little extra effort on your part but will add up considerably, especially if you keep

doing them on a regular basis. We should also be trying to avoid things like sugars or fried foods where possible. These things can add up and really count against us.

Even the simplest things can amount to a profound difference. There is one thing in particular that you need to avoid and it's quite easy to do. The amazing thing about it is that studies have indicated that avoiding this one simple thing can not only help you burn more fat and increase your health but also help protect you from heart disease, and promote longevity.

Relatively speaking, it takes a while to gain weight and lose that lean, fit body you used to have. Those bingo wings, fat tummies and love handles don't just appear overnight; they seem to creep up on you. A biscuit here and an extra beer there. Just a little bit at a time and before you know it ... one day you wake up and look at yourself in the mirror and a different looking person is staring back at you. The lean and fit is replaced by the soft and cuddly. You seemed to gain all this weight without changing anything of note ... it's just an accumulation of little things. **Little things like sitting.**

Maybe you sit a little longer watching TV, or you sit at work a little longer. Maybe you commute a little longer, which means you sit in your car, bus or the train a little longer. **Sitting 2 - 2 1/2 hours longer each day can add up to a difference between being overweight and not being overweight.** Being on your feet for that extra time can help you expend an additional 350 calories (kcal) per day. 350 calories a equates to 2450 calories a week or 10500 calories a month. There is 3500 calories per pound of fat, which means if you're burning 350 calories less per

day, it's the same as gaining about 1 pound of fat every 10 days. And if you stick at it, that's 126000 less calories you burn per year or 36 pounds of fat you gain in one year! Assuming everything else is kept constant, you're looking at an ever-expanding waistline!

It's amazing to think that this amount of sitting a day can add up to so much. And in reality, 2 hours isn't much if you break it down through out the whole day. This goes beyond just gaining weight as well. Other studies have also indicated that the more you sit the higher your chances are of getting serious diseases like diabetes, metabolic syndrome and heart disease. There's another important benefit to standing as well ... and that's posture and preventing low back pain. When you add in factors like these, doesn't it make you think that **it is time to stand up!**

The truth of the matter is that many of these extended sitting times may be out of your control. You commute long distances and that's something you can't change. You may not be able to change the long hours you work or the number of hours you spend sitting trains or cars travelling for work. But what you can change is everything outside of that. And the best and most effective place to start is by standing for longer periods of time.

The easiest way is to stand at work where possible. If that's not possible then try to include frequent mini breaks at work so you can stand up and walk around as often as possible. Another thing that you may want to do is to stand more at home. You can stand by the kitchen counter chatting rather than sitting. All this is better for your weight and health. You can also minimize TV time. Instead, do something more active like going for walks. If you want to effectively lose weight without too much upheaval, generally try and include as much walking into your day as you can. Take the stairs instead of the elevator, or perhaps you can walk to do your chores, or arrive at work 10 minutes earlier so you can walk around the block a couple of times before going in. There are plenty of ways to implement walking and standing into your daily routine. If there's an opportunity to stand or walk during your day ... embrace it!