

Healthy Living Activity Plan

Stretch Break

Brief Description

We all know that physical activity is important but often overlook stretching. Whether at a desk or in a car, many of us sit for long periods throughout the day. But our bodies are not designed for prolonged periods of sedentary behaviour! It can be difficult to remember to stretch when you're in the zone. This activity encourages employees to take mini stretch breaks throughout the day.

Time Commitment

- Draft the stretch itinerary and send out meeting requests (1 hour)
- All staff participate daily (5 minutes/day)

Required Resources

- Email with meeting and pop up reminder capability
- Visible locations to post stretching guides

Process

1. Using the [Stretching in the Workplace Guide](#) as a reference, create an itinerary for daily stretching. For example:
 - Monday – Head tilt, shoulder shrug and hand pull
 - Tuesday – Neck rotation, Triceps, Leg and ankle stretch
2. Choose a time during the day when most staff have been sitting for a long period of time. Send out a 5-minute recurring meeting request to all staff as a reminder to stretch daily at this time. Include the stretch itinerary and attach the *Stretching in the Workplace Guide*.
3. The “meetings” will pop up and remind everyone to take time for stretching, reinforcing this healthy behaviour.



Fun Twists

- Meet in a common space to stretch together as a group
- Schedule in stretch breaks during meetings to break up sitting

Considerations

- Remind staff to take about 5 minutes every hour to move and stretch if they are remaining in the same position for long periods of time.
- Staff using standing desks or who have more active jobs should also stretch.

Measures of Success

- Participation and feedback from staff

Business Success Story

Staff at the Chateau Victoria Hotel & Suites carry out varying levels of physical activity throughout the day. Some are very active (housekeeping and restaurant) whereas others are more sedentary (administration and front desk). To encourage good health amongst all team, management encouraged functional groups to develop the best system that encourages healthy habits for that team. The housekeeping team implemented a pre-shift stretch routine; the restaurant staff posted a “quick stretches” guide in the staff room, and the administrative team formed a walking group.