



## Put the Wiggles Back in Your Day

Think back to your elementary school years. Do you recall having recess so you could get your wiggles out? Teachers and administrative staff recognize that children need time to move and yell and get fresh air. Fast forward to your working life, now health and wellness experts are reminding worker bees that they need to wiggle more. Kind of ironic, isn't it?

Job responsibilities within and between state agencies certainly vary. Some employees sit at a desk, some operate heavy equipment, others work from their vehicle and the list goes on. We're here to help you tackle the "wiggle more" task.

**Desk job** – get up out of your seat often (once every 20-60 minutes). Stand up for telephone calls, walk to a co-worker's desk instead of calling or emailing, if you have a network of printers – print to the one farthest away from your desk. Remember to look away from the computer screen too (20/20/20 rule). Do modified push-ups at your desk and find a stable chair to do some "sit and stands" (sit in the chair and then stand back up – it mimics a squat). Get outside on your meal break for fresh air and a new perspective.

**Heavy duty** – take a break as often as possible to walk around, give your hands a break if you have to grip equipment for long periods of time. Change positions as often as possible to avoid being "locked" in one particular posture. If standing for long periods of time – try to prop a foot up on a small box or shovel and alternate which foot is up, to protect your lower back.

**Mobile office** – check your positioning in the vehicle...are you leaning to one side to type on a laptop? Does your work belt make it hard to sit properly? Are you holding a phone to your ear with your shoulder? Use speaker phone instead. Get out of the vehicle and walk around as often as possible. If you must drive for long periods of time, take breaks at regular intervals (once every 1-2 hours) to stretch your legs.

**General tips** – roll your shoulders to ease tension in the neck and upper back; when you get the urge to stretch, do it (your body is trying to tell you something); practice tall posture whether seated or standing (our bodies tend to default to what's comfortable and that's not usually the tall posture); wiggle your toes inside of your shoes (especially if seated for long periods of time). Remember, movement lubricates the joints, so if you feel stiff it may be time to move around. And most importantly, listen to your body...if something is painful; follow up with your physician.

**For more information go to:** <http://www.commonhealth.virginia.gov/wellgonomics.htm>

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