



## RPAW Active Workplace News

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### Bringing Health to Work

A few things the Canadian Health Network recommends you can do today to improve your health at work:

1. Simply put: follow your company's safety rules.
2. Remember to [stretch](#) about once an hour. When you do, think like a cat. Lengthen your muscles and really enjoy the moment.
3. Forward a 'Friday Funny'. Share the best (clean!) e-mail joke you received all week on Friday mornings. Did you know that laughter has been shown to increase immunity?
4. Boost your energy. Take a walk at lunch, or at least step outside for a few minutes. Sunlight and fresh air (and the little bit of exercise) are a great refreshing [break!](#) Try eating a [healthy snack](#) mid-morning or mid-afternoon. And don't forget to get enough [rest at night](#) (write "sleep" on your daily schedule if you have to!)
5. Have a social side to your company Intranet or newsletter. Post recipes, want ads, and announce the accomplishments of co-workers and their families outside of work.
6. Learn how to properly [adjust your chair](#). It may take a few minutes to master—and a few laughs when you press the wrong lever—but your body will thank you for it every day.
7. Ask for a [fitness](#) policy. While some companies can offer a full gym or fitness room, the policy can also be as simple as arranging to take an extra half hour at lunch twice a week to allow time to participate in an aerobic class, swim or a brisk walk.
8. Keep track of when you get aches and pains (including headaches) at work and when they go away. This record will help your safety officer or health professional determine what the problem is related to.
9. Be aware of how [stress](#) affects you. Take a time-out in a tense or high-pressure situation by getting up, walking around, or getting a drink of water. If you can't step away, a micro-break will help—count to 10 or at least take a breath before you respond. Any break will help change the momentum of the moment.
10. Don't forget to ask questions about how to make your job a safer one. If you are not sure about the safe way to do something, ask for help.

Click on the Alberta Centre for Active Living's link below for an updated fact sheet and information on how to wear a pedometer properly:

 [Pedometer Information Sheet](#)



#### [Workplace Health Links](#)

[Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute](#)

[Healthy Workplace Week](#)

[Coalition for Active Living](#)

[Northern Links](#)

Read RPAY's interview with YTG's Energy Mines and Resources department regarding their workplace health strategy.....

**Q: What health programs do you have in place?**

**A: A variety of lunch hour talks on healthy eating, smoking, diabetes etc., and fitness programs including boxing, boot camp, core training and yoga. We also have flexible hours, and an employee recognition committee.**

**Q: What motivated your company to employ these initiatives?**

**A: Employee satisfaction, input and productivity, as well as cost savings to the department and employee, and improving/changing workplace culture in a positive, beneficial and healthful way.**

**Q: What strategies are in place to ensure program success?**

**A: We have a committee in place with a senior management champion and a small budget. The Committee meets regularly and provides newsletters and updates through the website and weekly emails; all employees are encouraged to send suggestions to the Committee and members rotate regularly.**

**Q: What changes have you seen in your workplace as a result of the programming?**

**A: Improved employee health (reduced sick leave) and knowledge; improved relations through joint activities; and an increase in productivity.**

## Need to reclaim your energy?

(taken from the Canadian Health Network)

**1. Reassess your priorities.** It's unrealistic to think you can do everything. Instead, focus on things that really matter when deciding how you are going to spend your energy.

**2. Plan ahead.** Every week, figure out how you are going to take better care of yourself.

- Schedule time for exercise as you would a meeting or dentist appointment.
- Turn off the TV and go to sleep an hour earlier.
- Plan your lunch each day so you're not tempted to grab any old thing because you're so hungry.

**3. Recognize your unhealthy behaviour patterns and change one thing.** If your energy tends to fade around 3:00 p.m., take a walk or a nutrition break instead of drinking a coffee. "Going for a walk or drinking herbal tea or water will leave you more alert than a cup of coffee," says Hawirko. "Exercise also will invigorate you and help you sleep better whereas more coffee will just leave you feeling jittery and possibly interfere with your sleep."

**4. Focus on good nutrition** as part of your support system for yourself that gives the boot to stress-related fatigue.

- Get a healthy cookbook and make one new meal each week. Over time, this small change will add up to big improvements in energy levels and feelings of well-being.
- **Choose high-quality, complex carbohydrates** in moderate amounts and space them throughout the day. Examples include hummus, chickpeas, brown rice, whole grain cereals, fruits and vegetables. "Unprocessed foods have more vitamins and minerals [than processed foods] and will allow your body to function at its best," says Hawirko. Eating more complex carbohydrates also aids digestion and prevents constipation, which can also make you feel sluggish.

Visit [Health Canada](http://HealthCanada) to read about more Canadian workplace health case studies and stay tuned to [www.rpay.org](http://www.rpay.org) for more workplace health case studies.



For more information on healthy lifestyles, visit [www.rpay.org](http://www.rpay.org) or call our Active Living Coordinator at 668-2328