

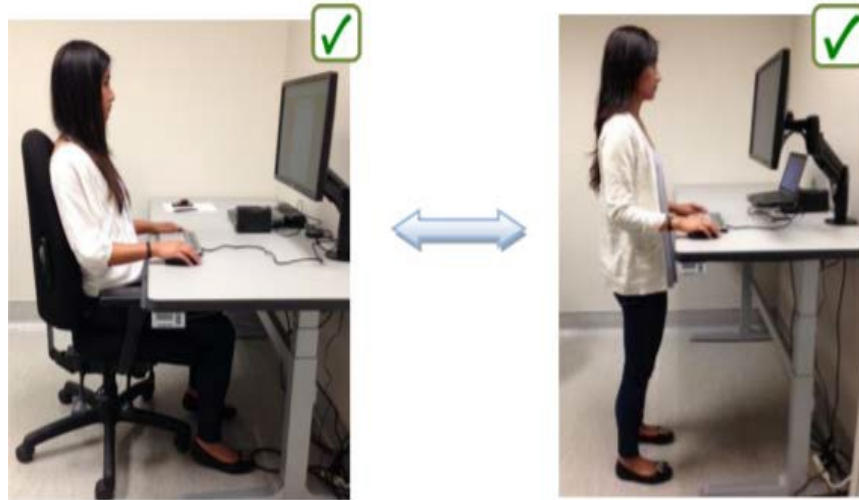
Ergonomics and Health

Sitting is killing you! Are you surprised? Probably not, because there has been lots of information about this online, in newspapers, research articles and books. Some of the health concerns associated with prolonged sitting are obesity, heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Your body is designed to move. It's not just a matter of how physically active you are, but also how much time you spend sitting. How can you improve your health if you have a job where you sit the majority of the day, like working on a computer, providing therapy to clients or driving a bus? Moving more is critical and in some cases ergonomic improvements can be helpful.

What does moving more mean and how can you incorporate it into your daily life? Joan Vernikos, former director of NASA's life sciences division, recommends constant, natural movements that resist the force of gravity. Her emphasis is on the number of sit to stand adjustments rather than the length of time you stand. In other words, she recommends going from sitting to standing and back again 30-35 times a day. For a typical workday that would be about 16 times or twice an hour. Here are a variety of [Move More](#) tips that can help you change your position during the day.

The best way to alternate between sitting and standing during the day is to choose things that are easy to follow and maintain, based on your schedule, job, body condition and willingness to move more. When you work in an office, Dr. Alan Hedge of Cornell University recommends that in every 30 minutes people sit for 20 minutes, stand for 8 minutes and then move around and stretch for 2 minutes. He does not recommend standing for longer than 10 minutes at a time.

In the office computer work environment, some companies have incorporated sit to stand workstations that promote posture changes throughout the work day and have positive ergonomic and health benefits. This type of ergonomic intervention can help the user work at the best seated height and also provide an opportunity to work productively in a standing position.



Whether your company has been able to incorporate these types of workstations into your environment or not, ultimately it is up to you to create a work environment that encourages you to fight gravity throughout the day. Whether you choose to stand up to speak on the phone or participate in a webinar, walk to a printer or take the stairs to collaborate with a colleague, it is important to move frequently throughout the day to stay healthy.