



VOLUME V ISSUE VI

MARCH 2018

Eating Healthy at your Desk

Often workdays are so busy that it is easy to work through lunch and then reach for treats for a nearby vending machine. Planning ahead with healthy snacks that can be stored in a desk drawer or office refrigerator can save time while also sparing your pocket book. Listed below are several easy healthy snacks that are perfect to reach for on those extra hectic workdays.

Kale Chips

Sprinkle fresh kale with olive oil and a touch of salt and bake at 375 for 10 minutes. Let them cool and place them in a container to take to work. Kale chips can also be purchased pre made.

Trail Mix

This quick and easy snack will be one to leave you feeling satisfied. Buying items such as nuts and dried fruit in bulk allows you to individually customize this protein packed snack on the go.

Hummus and Veggies

This light and refreshing protein packed snack is perfect if you are looking for a crunch. Opt for purchasing pre made hummus or make some at home with a food processor.

Hard Boiled Eggs

Prepping hard boiled eggs at the start of the week makes for a quick and easy snack. Perhaps consider even peeling the egg before you get to work to make this snack even simpler.

Smoothies

Grab left over fruit and veggies from the fridge, toss in a blender with some flax seeds and milk of choice. This snack can be stored in an office refrigerator for a refreshing mid-day treat.



NMU
WELLNESS COMMITTEE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Desk Snacks

Computer Eye Strain

**Stability Ball Vs Desk
Chair**

Desk Stretching

The purpose of the "Wildcat Wellness Connection" newsletter is to keep you informed about wellness related issues. Please note that information in this publication, along with other similar materials, is meant to complement the advice of your physician, not replace it. Before making any major changes in your medications, diet or exercise, please consult your physician.

Questions and Comments

*Please feel free to contact the Employee Wellness Graduate Assistant, Rhian Dalgord.
wellness@nmu.edu*

Completing work on a computer is often an unavoidable part of our workdays. In fact, it seems almost impossible to complete a task without the interplay of a technology device. Computer eyestrain is a common side effect of working long hours with electronic devices. Over 50% of individuals who work with computers complain of eyestrain on a recurrent basis. In this article, you will find tips and tricks to help manage computer related eyestrain.

#1 Comprehensive Eye Exam

Scheduling time to receive a comprehensive eye exam is imperative to good eye health. This short visit allows a detailed examination of the external and internal eye structures. The exam rules out any additional eye concerns that maybe contributing to eyestrain and other symptoms. You should receive an eye exam on an annual basis.

#2 Blink Blink Blink

The simple act of blinking is a protective and restorative mechanism for our eyes. Blinking allows for natural moisture and can help prevent dryness and irritation. Working at a computer screen causes us to blink approximately 1/3 less than we normally would. A great exercise that uses blinking is approximately every 20 minutes, slowly close your eyes 10 times. This is effective in rewetting your eyes surface.

#3 Take Screen Breaks

It has been found that most individuals only take two 15-minute breaks from their computer during the average workday. This leads to over exertion of the eye and causes many troublesome symptoms. Try adding in 5-minute mini breaks to your day. This is a great time to get up from your desk and stretch, giving your eyes much needed rest from the computer screen. By simply taking additional 5-minute breaks, a reduction in the symptoms related to eyestrain can be seen.

#4 Adjust your Computer Display Settings

The manufacture display settings that come preloaded on your computer may be greatly affecting your sensation of computer eyestrain. Try reviewing the settings for your computer display and make simple adjustments in brightness and text size. Adjusting your screen brightness to match your surrounding work environment and adjusting text size so it is easier to read will assist with eye strain management.

#5 Give your Eyes some Exercise

Focus fatigue is a large contributor to eye strain. Constantly staring at your computer screen leads to your eyes feeling tired and drained. Following the 20-20-20 rule can help shift your eye focus, giving your eyes a much needed break. The 20-20-20 rule works as follows:

-Every 20 minutes look away from your computer screen, focus on an object 20 feet away and remain focused on the object for 20 seconds.



NMU
WELLNESS COMMITTEE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

[Desk Snacks](#)

[Computer Eye Strain](#)

[Stability Ball Vs Desk Chair](#)

[Desk Stretching](#)

Stability Balls and Use at your Desk: The Pros and Cons

Stability balls in place of your desk chair are a new and emerging trend. Claims to improve overall health with a focus on posture and strength are making these balls appear at workstations across the nation. But is a stability ball right for you? This pamphlet will discuss the pros and cons and help you make the best choice for you.

What is a Stability Ball?

A stability ball is called by many different names including an exercise or yoga ball. This ball is made from a softer PVC material and correct sizing is based on your height. Depending on your height, you are placed into a range that correlates you to a ball that will best meet your needs.

The Pros

Stability balls claim to fame is the benefit they have towards engaging your core muscles. To maintain proper posture when sitting on a stability ball, your core must be engaged. An engaged core leads to stronger abdominal muscles and protects the muscles of the back. Those who suffer low back pain have seen benefits of using a stability ball in place of your traditional desk chair.

The Cons

One major drawback of stability balls when compared to traditional office chairs is the lack of arm support. Stability balls lack traditional armrests and many can argue that this leads to additional neck and shoulder pain. Some claim that alternating between the two options provides an effective and beneficial balance.

As with any change, it is best to talk with your healthcare provider regarding techniques that are best for your individualized health.

Desk Stretching

A new phrase being shared around the wellness community is that, "sitting is the new smoking". The average American will sit for 7.7-15 hours per day! This is resulting in an increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, back pain, obesity and depression. It has also been shared that daily attendance to a gym either before or after work does not negate the long sitting hours throughout the workday. However, the great news is that approximately 5 minutes per hour can help reverse the negative effects imparted by sitting. In fact, stretching at your desk has numerous benefits including increased alertness and flexibility, a reduction in anxiety and an improvement in spine health. See below for some great stretches that can be done right at your desk!



References

All About Vision. (2018). Retrieved February 5, 2018

Healthline, (2018). Retrieved February 9, 2018.

Healthy Essentials. (2018). Retrieved February 22, 2018.

Livestrong. (2018). Retrieved February 6, 2018.

NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERISTY

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

1401 Presque Isle Avenue

2816 West Science

Marquette, MI 49855

Email: wellness@nmu.edu

