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GIVE ME A BREAK: MAINTAINING MOBILITY

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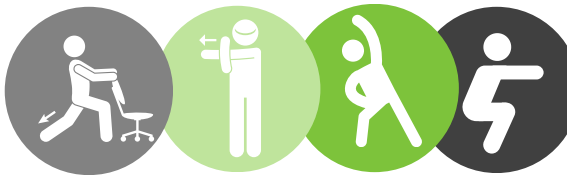

Staying active during the workday is vital for maintaining both physical and mental well-being. Whether you're working on the production floor or in an office, long periods of sitting or repetitive movements can lead to discomfort, fatigue, and even long-term health issues. That's why incorporating mobility throughout the day, especially through microbreaks, is so important.

WHAT ARE MICROBREAKS?

Some people associate the word "break" with stopping work altogether, which isn't the goal. Microbreaks are short, intentional pauses taken throughout the day to move and reset your body. They typically last 1 to 5 minutes and can be as simple as stretching, walking, or performing light exercises. The key is consistency. Taking these small pauses regularly helps counteract the negative effects of prolonged sitting or standing and boosts energy, focus, and productivity.

THE POWER OF MOVING IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS

One effective strategy is to incorporate movements that engage different muscle groups. For example, after spending time bending forward, such as while working on machinery or sitting at a desk, try standing and gently arching your back or stretching your arms overhead.

Alternating between movements that stretch and contract different parts of your body can prevent stiffness, improve posture, and reduce strain on muscles and joints. If you're standing in one spot for long periods, try shifting your weight from one foot to the other or doing light side steps to break up the motion.

Check out the 411 on Microbreaks here!

BENEFITS BEYOND THE BODY

The benefits of taking time to move go beyond just physical health. Microbreaks can help refocus the mind, reduce stress, and improve overall mood. This can be especially important in high-demand environments like production floors, where mental clarity and focus are crucial. Even just a few moments away from a task can help you come back with renewed energy and fresh ideas.

Tips for Incorporating Movement Into Your Day

- **Set a timer:** Use a phone or watch to remind yourself to take a microbreak every 30-60 minutes. Even a quick walk or stretch can make a big difference.
- **Stretch or move at the start of the day:** Begin your workday with a brief stretch to get your blood flowing and your body prepared for physical tasks ahead.
- **Use downtime wisely:** When waiting for equipment to start or during a lull, take advantage of the time to move around. Stretch your arms, walk around, or even do a few squats.
- **Encourage team breaks:** If you're on the production floor, suggest to coworkers that you all take breaks together to get a quick stretch or step outside for a breath of fresh air.

Vanessa Punches, MS, LAT, ATC, CSCS, CES || Vanessa graduated with her Bachelor's degree in Athletic Training from Washington State University and her Master's degree in Post-Professional Athletic Training from Texas State University. She is currently working on her doctorate from Purdue Global University in the hopes of one day teaching others how to become athletic trainers. Outside of work, Vanessa enjoys paddle boarding, crocheting, and looking for her dog, Waldo.

Work Right is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialists in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.