

# Warning: The Hidden Danger Of Your Desk Job

Written by Arizona Foothills Magazine

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It's obvious you want vibrant health. You get up early and exercise before work. You follow your calisthenics with a healthy breakfast to start the day right. You may also make sure you have a balanced lunch and dinner. Then, just to make sure, you play racquetball in the evening. Since you're eating right and exercising, you probably feel great. And since you may also have given up on smoking and alcohol, you probably look great.

You put yourself through all this because you don't want to have aches and pains. You also don't want to be sickly and detest the idea of dragging through the day. Besides, you don't want to come down with a serious illness.

## The Hidden Danger at Work

Despite your healthy lifestyle, there's one thing you may have overlooked. It's your job.

You might believe, as most people do, that a desk job is probably one of the safest things in the world. After all, you're not on a high rise cleaning windows from the outside.

But the most innocent thing you do, sitting down to do your work, has some hidden dangers. Specifically sitting down for hours on end puts you at risk for a number of illnesses.

Sitting can lead to a cluster of the following metabolic issues:

- Excess fat around the waist, even obesity
- High blood pressure
- High blood sugar
- Abnormal cholesterol levels
- Cardiovascular disease
- Cancer (due to a poor immune system)

[Julie Corliss](#), Executive Editor of the Harvard Heart Letter, confirms these health risks in her review of the groundbreaking work of Dr. Joanne Foody:

- "The health hazards of not moving much are wide ranging," says Dr. Joanne Foody, who directs the Cardiovascular Wellness Center at Harvard-affiliated Brigham and Women's Hospital. "While we often think of the dangers of inactivity in terms of worsening cardiovascular health, there are a myriad of negative effects," she says. "The current study documented higher rates of type 2 diabetes, cancer, and cancer-related deaths in very sedentary people. An unrelated study has linked more sitting and less activity with an increased risk of developing dementia."

## How to Save Your Own Life

Fortunately, the dangers of sitting can be easily prevented. Stand more.

Stand when you have a chance. After all, you only have to sit at your desk when you're writing, using a computer, or conversing with a colleague or client. You can stand when get a chance. You can even walk around while you work.

## How to Take Charge of Your "Sitting" Problem

Here are some ways you could spend more time on your feet:

- Stand while talking on the phone, dictating a memo, or eating lunch.
- Walk with someone you're discussing business with outside the office instead of sitting across a table.
- Look into the idea of [standing desks](#). These allow you to alternate between sitting and standing while working. All you have to do is push a button to electrically raise or lower the desk.
- If possible, put a treadmill in your office, so you can take walking breaks.
- Use a timer so that you have to get up at specified break times. This will prevent you from getting absorbed in your work and sitting for hours.

## Why Standing is the New Normal

You may be familiar with the benefits of a good diet, exercise, and abstinence from toxic habits. But you may not have considered the benefits of standing.

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Briefly, you will improve your health in the following ways:

- You will burn more calories.
- You may lose excess weight and increase energy.
- Standing will stimulate muscle activity. This will help trigger metabolic activities to breakdown fats and sugars. (Sitting stalls these metabolic functions.)

### Sitting As Dangerous As Smoking?

You may appreciate the importance of standing at work if you've heard how sitting can be as dangerous as smoking. This is due to a sluggish metabolism making you vulnerable to cardiovascular diseases.

But if this whole idea is new to you, you may doubt if it's fair to link sitting with smoking.

An article in Forbes magazine entitled, ["Is Sitting The New Smoking?"](#) by contributors David Sturt and Todd Nordstrom reviews Tom Rath's New York Times bestselling book, *Eat Move Sleep*. They quote Rathas saying, "Sitting is the most underrated health-threat of modern time. Researchers found that sitting more than six hours in a day will greatly increase your risk of an early death....Inactivity is dangerous. In fact, some research shows inactivity now kills more people than smoking."

### Sitting on the Job

It may seem a radical shift in perspective to consider sitting at work as unproductive. But the research shows that prolonged inactivity can result in serious illnesses. By standing every 30 minutes for 1 to 3 minutes, you can increase your health, wealth, and well-being. You can also look into a health adjustable desk.