



SOUTH SUBURBAN STRONG

Your Local Wellness Resource

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South Suburban Chamber of Commerce
Serving Oak Creek, Franklin and the surrounding communities.

WORKPLACE WELLNESS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY by Mary Starr, The Starr Group

There is a need to educate employees on the importance of regular physical activity and the resulting positive affect this will have on their overall wellness and disease prevention.

Over 70% of Americans do not exercise enough to maintain their health. This lack of physical activity contributes to obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, cancer and depression just to name a few.

The cost of the health problems caused by inactivity is increasingly borne by employers who see their insurance and worker's compensation premiums rising as productivity declines. Unhealthy workers require more medical care, take more sick days, and are

less productive on the job.

The recommended amount of physical activity is 30-60 minutes of moderate exercise 5 days/week, muscle strengthening 2-3 days per week and stretching 2-3 days per week.

Exercise is considered the magic bullet because there is no pill that has the

positive affect on health like physical activity. It is the single best route to a long and active life. Exercise does more than contribute to good health.

It contributes to leadership, productivity and innovation. It unleashes human potential and is what drives economies forward. Focusing on your employee's physical activity can become your competitive advantage!



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Welcome to the **South Suburban Strong**, a new quarterly publication from the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce that can be used as a resource for your company's wellness initiatives. All of the highlights and resources are local, and, whenever possible, will help promote wellness activities hosted by chamber members.

We are looking for success stories that your company has had with employee wellness programming as well cost-effective resources from our wellness business members that could help promote employee wellness. Please submit any information for consideration to:

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WHAT RESEARCHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT SITTING DISEASE

"For people who sit most of the day, their risk of heart attack is about the same as smoking" ~ [Martha Grogan](#), cardiologist, Mayo Clinic

"Today, our bodies are breaking down from obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, depression, and the cascade of health ills and everyday malaise that come from what scientists have named sitting disease."~ [James Levine](#), MD, PhD

"Prolonged sitting should be considered within occupational health and safety policies and practices just like other elements of posture."~ [British Journal of Sports Medicine](#)

"We've become so sedentary that 30 minutes a day at the gym may not counteract the detrimental effects of 8, 9 or 10 hours of sitting."
~ [Genevieve Healy](#), PhD

Taken from: juststand.org



**SOUTH SUBURBAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
HEALTH & WELLNESS COUNCIL**

The Health and Wellness Council of the SSCC was established in 2013 to address employee wellness among chamber businesses. Since then, the Council facilitated a Workplace Wellness Lunch and Learn Series, a local Healthy Dining Out Week, and now will be providing you with South Suburban Strong, a local quarterly publication dedicated to workplace wellness programming for chamber businesses.

Mission Statement:

It is the mission of the South Suburban Chamber's Health and Wellness Council to promote and support wellness amongst our members and the community as a whole by means of providing integrated resources, education and opportunities which will support attainable goals, enhance the health and wellbeing of our members and increase community awareness regarding the importance of choosing a healthy lifestyle.

WHY YOUR WORKER'S NEED A SPRING BREAK!

One of the top components growing in popularity looks to be increased employee vacation time, with 66% of respondents in a recent workplace wellness survey stating that they were offering more paid time off to their workforce. It's a no-brainer why workers would appreciate this wellness initiative — but why are employers so on board?

Lower Health Risks

According to research, more vacation days are actually better for your health.

One study on middle-aged men at risk for Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) found that as the frequency of vacation days taken increased, the risk of overall mortality and CHD-related mortality decreased. Another found that men who went vacation-less for several years had a 30% higher likelihood of heart attack. Even just one year without vacation can increase heart disease risks.

Even if heart disease isn't on your radar, keep in mind that the mostly-sedentary lifestyle that accompanies many 9 to 5 jobs can lead to big health problems and a messed-up metabolism. Vacation can help combat these effects.

Sharper Mental Acuity

Any employer knows that with working comes some degree of stress, which is bad for mental health. Stress can cloud our judgments and affect decision-making. One study by the National Institutes of Health found that when we're under chronic stress, our ability to make goal-oriented decisions basically ceases and automatic decision-making takes over. Taking a vacation lowers stress and helps your decision-making process.

Boost Morale & Productivity

The Society for Human Resource Management notes that a more generous vacation policy will help employers attract and retain more engaged, productive workers.

When employees see their employers care about their mental health and work-life balance, morale goes up and turnover goes down. Employees are actually more motivated to get work done so that they can leave responsibilities at the desk when they take time off.

Article from:
what-is-workplace-wellness.com

INCORPORATING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTO WORKPLACE WELLNESS

- Start a 12 week step program with the goal of 10,000 step equivalents per day.
- Provide pedometers or a step conversion chart to all participants to track their steps.
- Expose employees to fun challenges (plank, wall squat, tree pose, pushups, jump rope).
- Start your own office Olympics.
- Provide Lunch and Learns with topics including Pilates, stretching and strength training. See your local fitness provider for ideas and options.
- Participate in a local charity walk, run or bike event.
- Begin a couch to 5K challenge. To find local runs go to: <http://www.runningintheusa.com/Race/List.aspx?Rank=All&State=WI>
- Send weekly educational emails on the importance of regular physical activity.
- Start your own Iron Man in a Month Challenge with the goal of completing a 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike and 26.2 mile run in a month.
- Hold 10-15 minute Flash Fitness sessions daily or weekly. Participants walk in place while watching a free video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndVjwkaLGDk>.
- Incorporate a Physical Activity Policy to show your support of physical fitness in the workplace.
- Share walking paths in your area. Specify and communicate your own designated walking path in your building or on your grounds.
- Support and get your employees involved in the American Heart Association's National Walking Day on April 1st.
- There are many chamber members who have services to support your physical fitness interventions. For a list of these members visit: <http://business.southsuburbanchamber.com/list/ql/sports-recreation-24>.
- Join the Wellness Council of Wisconsin where you will have access to a wealth of resources (newsletter articles, incentive challenges, case studies) to help you get started or to take your program to the next level.
- Encourage walking meetings.