

EXERCISES TO DO AT YOUR DESK

> 60-SECOND AEROBICS

- Glance at the clock and rip off a minute's worth of jumping jacks. If you're a beginner, try the low-impact version: Raise your right arm and tap your left toe to the side while keeping your right foot on the floor; alternate sides).
- Do a football-like drill of running in place for 60 seconds. Get those knees up! (Beginners, march in place.)
- Simulate jumping rope for a minute: Hop on alternate feet, or on both feet at once. An easier version is to simulate the arm motion of turning a rope, while alternately tapping the toes of each leg in front.
- While seated, pump both arms over your head for 30 seconds, then rapidly tap your feet on the floor, football-drill style, for 30 seconds. Repeat 3 to 5 times.
- If you can step into a vacant office or conference room, shadow-box for a minute or two. Or just walk around the room as fast as you can.
- Or do walk-lunges in your office or a vacant room. (You could also amuse your co-workers by doing these in the hall; remember Monty Python's "Ministry of Silly Walks" comedy routine?). Set your PDA to beep you into action.
- No conference room? Take to the stairs—two at a time.

> STRENGTH-BUILDING SUGGESTIONS

- Do one-legged squats (hold onto a wall or table for support) while waiting for a web page to load, the copier or printer to spit out your reports, or faxes to slither out.
- Stand with one leg straight and try to kick your buttocks with the other.
- Sitting in your chair, lift one leg off the seat, extend it out straight, hold for 2 seconds; then lower your foot (stop short of the floor) and hold for several seconds. Switch; do each leg 15 times.
- To work your chest and shoulders, place both hands on your chair arms and slowly lift your bottom off the chair. Lower yourself back down but stop short of the seat, hold for a few seconds. Do 15 times.
- Stretch your back and strengthen your biceps. Place your hands on the desk; hang on and slowly push your chair back until your head is between your arms and you're looking at the floor. Now slowly pull yourself back in. Again, 15 of these.
- Desk pushups can be a good strengthener. (First, make sure your desk is solid enough to support your weight.) Standing, put your hands on the desk. Walk backward, then do push-ups against the desk. Repeat 15 times.

> REACH FOR THE SKY

Stretching exercises are a natural for the desk-bound, to help ease stress and keep your muscles from clenching up.

- Sitting tall in your chair, stretch both arms over your head and reach for the sky. After 10 seconds, extend the right hand higher, then the left.
- Let your head loll over so that your right ear nearly touches your right shoulder. Using your hand, press your head a little lower (gently, now). Hold for 10 seconds. Relax, then repeat on the other side.
- Try this yoga posture to relieve tension: Sit facing forward, then turn your head to the left and your torso to the right, and hold a few seconds. Repeat 15 times, alternating sides.
- Sitting up straight, try to touch your shoulder blades together. Hold, and then relax.
- Put your feet up! To ease hamstrings and lower back, push your chair back and put your right heel on the desk. Sit up straight, and bend forward just until you feel a gentle stretch in the back of your leg. Flex your foot a few seconds, then point it. Bend forward a little farther, flex your foot again; hold 10 seconds. Repeat on the other side.

> UNOBTRUSIVE BUT EFFECTIVE

If the boss wonders why your feet are on the desk, what about some invisible exercises?

- Women can do Kegels: tightening and holding, then loosening, their pelvic floor muscles (the muscles that control the flow of urine when you go to the bathroom). This will prevent leakage and other problems down the line.
- Butt clenches are also helpful in today's booty-conscious society. Tighten your buttocks, hold, hold, hold, and then relax. Repeat 15 times. The same goes for ab squeezes—just tighten your tummy muscles instead.

> USE EVERY MINUTE ACTIVELY

- Walk during lunch break. Too boring for you? Grab a camera and walk around taking photos. Some experts say it's ideal to walk 10,000 steps a day; depending on the length of your stride, this can be five miles.
- And forget emailing the guy three cubes over: Walk.