



WORKPLACE OPTIONS


Learning Objectives

- Identify common causes of stress
- Provide stress busters and relaxation techniques to reduce stress
- Discuss the importance of good posture, the advantages it provides, and the consequences of developing bad posture
- Provide easy and safe stretching techniques that can be executed in the workplace

WORKPLACE OPTIONS

Causes of Stress at Work

- Work load
- Deadlines
- Desk clutter



WORKPLACE OPTIONS

Stress Busters

- Practice letting go
- Breathe slowly and deeply
- Practice speaking more slowly than usual
- Use a time management technique

WORKPLACE OPTIONS


Stress Busters (cont.)

- Go outside for a quick break
- Drink plenty of water and eat small healthful snacks
- Check your posture
- Plan a reward for the end of your day

WORKPLACE OPTIONS

Relaxation Techniques

- Diaphragmatic breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Guided imagery
- Meditation



Diaphragmatic Breathing

- Changing your breathing will allow you to think more clearly
- Changing your thinking will allow your breathing to slow and become deeper
 - Sit back in your seat
 - Make your hands comfortable
 - Close your eyes
 - Take a deep breath (inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth)
 - Breathe again - Repeat until you feel calm and settled

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- A two-step process to relax your muscles
 - Find a quiet place
 - Find a comfortable position that supports your head and neck
 - Close your eyes and take deep breaths
 - Tighten the muscles in your hands (clench your fists) for four seconds and then release
 - Repeat this process with other muscles in your body
 - Focus on letting go of the tension in that muscle area
 - Finish with slow and even breathing

Guided Imagery

You will need:

- Quiet time
- Privacy
- An alarm clock (maybe)

Steps:

- Get into a comfortable position
- Start using diaphragmatic breathing
- Begin to envision yourself in a relaxing environment
- Involve all of your senses in this imagery
- Stay in this place for as long as you need






Meditation


The most basic way to meditate:

- Get into a comfortable position
- Close your eyes
- Clear your head

Additional tips:


- Give yourself time
- Start with short sessions
- There are other types of meditation that you can try:
 - Focused meditation
 - Activity-oriented meditation
 - Mindfulness techniques
 - Spiritual meditation






Safe and Effective Stretching


- Three tips before you begin stretching:
 - Take a general review of the area to be stretched
 - Do all stretches gently and slowly
 - Stretch only to the point of tension
- In conjunction with regular stretching:
 - Move around
 - Drink plenty of water
 - Practice deep breathing






Stretches You Can Do While Seated


- Let your chin fall forward to your chest; relax your shoulders and keep your hands by your sides
- Keeping your shoulders still and your head forward, slowly rotate your chin towards your shoulder (left and right)
- Interlock your fingers in front of your chest and straighten your arms with your palms facing outward
- Sit upright and place one arm across your body; keeping your arm parallel to the ground, pull your elbow in toward your opposite shoulder (repeat on both sides)



Healthy Posture


- What is good posture?
 - Training your body to stand, walk, sit or lie down in a position where the least strain is placed on your supporting muscles and ligaments
- Why is good posture important?
 - Keeps bones and joints correctly aligned
 - Helps decrease normal wear and tear of joints
 - Decreases stress on ligaments
 - Prevents spinal abnormalities
 - Prevents strain
 - Prevents back and muscular pain
 - Contributes to overall better appearance






Healthy Posture (cont.)

- Requirements for healthy posture
 - Muscle flexibility
 - Normal range of motion in joints
 - Balanced (symmetrical) spinal muscles
 - Awareness of your posture
- Contributors to poor posture
 - Obesity
 - Pregnancy
 - Weak muscles
 - High-heeled shoes
 - Tight muscles
 - Poor work environment
 - Poor sitting and standing habits



Healthy Posture for Sitting

- Sit with your back straight and shoulders back
- Allow the natural curves of your back to be present
- Distribute your body weight evenly
- Bend your knees at right angles
- Keep your feet flat on floor



Healthy Posture for Sitting (cont.)


- Avoid sitting in the same position for more than 30 minutes at a time
- Adjust chair height and work station so that you can sit close to your work
- Turn your whole body instead of twisting at waist
- When going from sitting to standing avoid bending at the waist

Healthy Posture for Standing

- Hold your head up and straight (chin in)
- Align earlobes with the center of your shoulders
- Hold your shoulder blades back, chest forward and knees straight
- Stretch the top of your head toward the ceiling
- Hold your stomach in
- Wear shoes that support the arches in your feet
- Avoid standing in the same position for too long
- When standing for long periods of time, try to elevate one foot on a stool (switch elevated foot every few minutes)


Benefits of Practicing Relaxation Techniques

- Increased ability to concentrate
- Increased ability to deal with unavoidable stress
- Better communication with co-workers and superiors
- Better health
- Overall increase in positive career outlook

 WORKPLACE OPTIONS

Resources

Contact your EAP
or
Work-Life Program
for
Assistance

 WORKPLACE OPTIONS

Thank You!

Questions???

 WORKPLACE OPTIONS

Works Cited

- (n.d.). Diaphragmatic Breathing: The Correct Way To Breathe. Retrieved from <http://www.stress-and-relaxation.com/diaphragmatic-breathing.html>
- (n.d.). Progressive Muscle Relaxation. Retrieved from <http://webpage.ship.edu/cgboer/musclerelaxation.html>
- Short, E. (2006). Use Guided Imagery For Relaxation. Retrieved from <http://stress.about.com/od/generaltechniques/ht/howtoimagery.htm>
- (n.d.). How to Meditate. Retrieved from <http://www.alternative-medicine.net/meditation/english.html>
- (n.d.). Stretching at your Desk or Computer. Retrieved from <http://www.thestretchinghandbook.com/archives/desk-stretches.php>
- (n.d.). Posture for a Healthy Back. Retrieved from http://my.clevelandclinic.org/healthy_living/back_health/nc/posture_for_a_healthy_back.aspx
- (n.d.). Posture for a Healthy Back. Retrieved from <http://www.clevelandclinic.org/health/health-info/docs/0300/0359.asp?index=4485>
