Healthy habits while working at home

Use this checklist to assess and improve your health habits while working from home. Working from home can create opportunities to improve your health behaviours. For example, reduced commuting times allows you more time to exercise or spend time with your family. However some people may experience increased levels of stress and anxiety and find they eat more unhealthy snacks while working from home.

For support or further information, speak with your doctor or local health professional.

**STEP 1**

Use this checklist to assess your health habits while working from home and ask yourself:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Risk factors** | **Yes** |
| Am I not exercising through the day?  (e.g. I am not achieving 10,000 steps in the day/30min of moderate exercise each day, I am spending less time outside than I would normally) |  |
| Am I sedentary through the workday?  (e.g. sitting for longer periods, not changing my position as much?) |  |
| Am I skipping my break times due to meetings or my workload?  (e.g. working through lunch or not having a break from work) |  |
| Am I eating or snacking throughout the day?  (e.g. more food portions or bigger portions than usual) |  |
| Am I eating or drinking high sugar, high fat foods?  (e.g. takeaway foods, less water, soft drinks, chocolates than usual) |  |
| Am I consuming more alcohol than the recommended health guidelines  (e.g. more than two standard drinks per day)? |  |
| Am I smoking cigarettes or other tobacco products? |  |
| Am I checking my work phone, emails or computer outside of work time?  (e.g. on weekends, late at night or early in the morning) |  |

**STEP 2**

If you answered ‘yes’ to any of the above questions, you have identified a risk that can have an impact on your health and wellbeing. These risk factors include unhealthy eating, limited physical activity and sedentary behaviour, harmful alcohol consumption, smoking and poor mental health. Consider making a change to the way you work and your lifestyle habits.

**STEP 3**

Choose three actions from the list below or add your own and work on making these small changes in your daily schedule over the next month.

* Achieve 10,000 steps a day or complete 30 minutes of moderate exercise a day. Consider breaking the exercise in to short 5-10 minute blocks throughout the day. Use a mobile device with headphones to be active while having a meeting where possible.
* Set reminders for every hour to stand up and change your posture, stand up while talking on the phone or during video meetings, purchase or set up a workstation that allows you to stand.
* Book a set time in your diary to have a break from work.
* Create boundaries between work and home (where appropriate) including shutting down work computers, setting the work phone to silent or off, place work items away from family areas to decrease temptation to interact outside of work time.
* Create a meal plan or calendar to reduce incidental snacking through the day and increase hydration.
* Discuss options for quitting smoking with your health practitioner or contact Quit HQ.
* Discuss start and finish times, work expectations, demands and requirements with your manager to provide clarity and open communication.
* Schedule regular check-ins, virtual tea breaks or catchups with work colleagues, share your ideas and changes made to improve your health.
* Report any issues early and discuss with your manager.

**Resources**

The resources below will help you make positive changes and improve your health while working from home.

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| [Boost your healthy](https://hw.qld.gov.au/boostyourhealthy/) | Health and wellbeing Queensland website dedicated to providing health information. |
| [Get healthy Qld](http://www.gethealthyqld.com.au/) Coaching and Information Service | This is a free and confidential phone-based service designed to help Queenslanders make positive physical activity and nutritional changes. Promote the service as part of your workplace wellness program. Participants receive:   * a personal health coach * 10 free coaching calls over six months * resources to help with their progress. |
| [My Health for Life!](https://www.myhealthforlife.com.au/) | An online health assessment and telephone coaching service to assist you to make the changes you want to make in your life. |
| [Quit HQ](https://quithq.initiatives.qld.gov.au/) | There are plenty of ways to quit smoking, so there’s sure to be one that suits you. |
| [10,000 steps](http://www.10000steps.org.au/) | A free health promotion program that encourages the use of step-counting pedometers to monitor your daily physical activity levels. |
| [Exercise right](https://exerciseright.com.au/) | A public awareness campaign created by Exercise and Sport Science Australia. |
| [Australian Government Health Direct](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/fitness-and-exercise) | Videos and links on exercise and fitness for those new to working out and those more advanced. |
| [Nutrition Australia Queensland](https://naqld.org/services/healthy-at-home/) | Resources to assist you to eat healthy while at home. There is also a guide on substitutes if you are having trouble getting your usual ingredients at the supermarket. |
| [Eating for a healthier headspace](https://headspace.org.au/young-people/eating-for-a-healthy-headspace/) | Headspace has a dedicated page on how what we eat affects how we feel. Eating a healthy diet can improve our mental health. |