

The benefits of physical-activity programs at work consist of employee alertness, decreased injuries, less absenteeism and overall well-being of the employees. Employers have reduced health care costs by 20 to 55 percent, reduced sick leave by 6 to 32 percent and increased employee productivity up to 52 percent<sup>1</sup>. Less sick time and increased productivity make physical-activity programs a good return on investment; there are many ways for incorporating physical activity programs into the workday. Try these:

### Everyday steps...

- Support and promote physical-activity breaks during the workday, such as stretching or walking.
- Employ incentive-based programs to encourage physical activity, such as pedometer-walking challenges or bike-to-work challenges.
- Encourage employees to understand their physical-activity level compared to recommendations. Try the free MyFitness Planner at [www.dairycouncilofca.org/fitnessplanner](http://www.dairycouncilofca.org/fitnessplanner).
- Offer off-site incentives, such as discounted memberships at local health clubs, recreation centers or YMCAs—or on-site opportunities, such as group classes, physical activity with personal trainers or ‘walking’ meetings.
- Send out company emails once a week or month on activities employees can do at work and at their desks.

### Promotional steps...

- Implement a **Walk-to-Work** day for employees. To achieve this, make sure there are safe walking routes to work. Designate a few employees to take lead on assigned meeting areas to safely walk other employees to the office building.
- Apply a **Take-the-Stairs** day once a week. This can be done by posting motivational reminders on all elevators, escalators and entrances into the work building. Make sure all stairways meet building safety measures before putting this into practice.
- Host a **Walk-With-the-Manager** program. Each manager takes his or her department out for a walk. Consider taking the employees out on two separate shifts so as to not disturb the flow of the workday.

### Team-building steps...

- If there are local sports venues, teams or clubs near your workplace, sponsor a company sport team (i.e., softball, soccer, bicycling or volleyball). Survey employees on the sports in which they are most likely to participate and build a team.
- Start a **Fitness Challenge**. This can be done over a few weeks, months or even a year. Try the fitness challenge on [www.dairycouncilofca.org/workplace](http://www.dairycouncilofca.org/workplace).
- Host a **Lunch-and-Learn** day. Visit [www.dairycouncilofca.org/workplace](http://www.dairycouncilofca.org/workplace) for a self-contained online webinar on physical activity, and don't forget to schedule in those physical-activity breaks.

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services