Home Office Tips: Staying Healthy

Working from a home office can impact your mental and physical health. Some days may feel long or repetitive, making them feel endless. Your mood and ability to focus also impacts your productivity. Establishing healthy work habits and a work-life balance is important to keep your productivity high and to stay healthy both physically and mentally. This one pager provides tips to promote healthy work habits during telework.

Image retrieved from Bing Images (Creative Commons)

SET UP A DEDICATED WORKSPACE

Designate a workspace to establish boundaries between family life and working at home. Choosing and dedicating a workspace can help you stay focused and avoid distractions. Review the SMCX "*Home Office Tips: Setting Up Your Workstation*" one pager to help you work more comfortably and safely.

ESTABLISH A ROUTINE

Establish a routine to promote and maintain your work-life balance. It is important to start your day like you were getting ready to go into the office—brushing your teeth, changing your clothes, and eating breakfast. Take time to eat lunch every day; preparing a meal similar to one you would eat if you were working in your normal work setting. More importantly, identifying set times to start and end your work day encourages you to stop working (e.g., not answer emails or phone calls) when work hours are over.

SOCIALIZE WITH OTHERS

Isolation is a concern when working from home, especially if you live by yourself. Schedule phone calls and video calls to stay connected with your colleagues, just as you would in an actual office setting!

SMCX
DoD Safety Management Center of Excellence

January 2021

PLAN FOR PERIODIC BREAKS

You can develop back pain and neck strains when sitting for prolonged periods of time. You can also experience eye strain from looking at the computer screen too long. Take periodic breaks throughout the day to help you stay healthy. During each break, walk away from your workspace to stretch your body and relax your eyes. During longer breaks, consider getting out of the house for some fresh air to revitalize yourself, taking a walk around your neighborhood, or going out to get the mail during lunch.
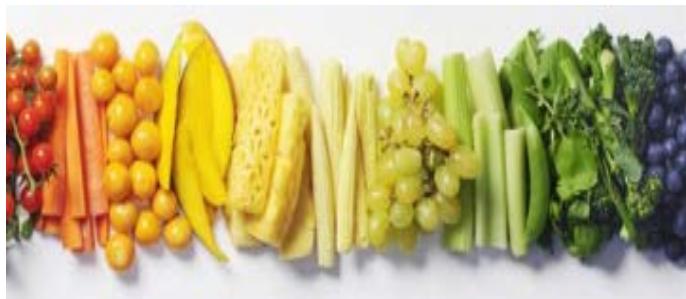
Image retrieved from Bing Images (Creative Commons)

STOCK UP ON HEALTHY SNACKS & DRINKS

Avoid munching on junk food and drinking sugary beverages all day long. Don't keep bags of candy and other unhealthy foods near your workspace to avoid unwanted grazing. When grocery shopping, stock up on healthy snacks (e.g., vegetables, nuts, fruits) and drinks (e.g., water, if necessary) to promote healthy eating habits. Staying hydrated is also an important factor in keeping yourself focused.

CONDUCT REGULAR HOME OFFICE HAZARD ASSESSMENTS

Do you have any hazards in your home which could adversely impact your health? You should conduct periodic hazard assessments in your home to determine if there are any hazards needing addressed. Be sure to take action on anything you identify. Reach out to your safety office for ideas on hazard prevention and abatement, if needed. Review the SMCX "*Home Office Tips: Hazard Assessment*" one pager for additional ideas.

CLEAN YOUR WORKSPACE

Dust can lead to allergies and make you feel unwell, while cluttered workspaces can interfere with your productivity. Establish a schedule to clean your workspace (e.g., every Friday). Dust each area and wipe down work surfaces. Reorganize your workspace and remove any clutter generated during the work week.

Image retrieved from Bing Images (Creative Commons)

THINK BEYOND WORK

The actions and activities you perform outside work hours can affect your productivity and stress levels too. Establish consistent exercise schedules and sleep hours to manage anxiety and stress. Consider a session of yoga or meditation after a long day of work to wind down and transition to home life.

For additional information on the SMCX's services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: https://www.smscx.org/.