



Wellbeing Insights

Living a Better, More Vibrant Life



Sit, Stand, Balance, Walk

Everything you need to know about alternative work stations

The link between a sedentary lifestyle and increased health risks is well-established. Over the past several years, particular attention has been given to the risk associated with having a 'desk job' as studies show that even if you are a gym-goer, that may not be enough to offset the effects of prolonged sitting throughout the workday. In addition, many employers are seeing an uptick in musculoskeletal claims. With all of this attention turned to our workstations, several attempts to help remedy the design of American office culture have been made. Standing desks, treadmill desks and stability balls come in as three of the top trending alternative workstation solutions to combat sedentary desk time. Here are the key

considerations if you're looking to make an adjustment to your workspace:

Stability Balls

Whether you call it a stability ball, Swiss ball or exercise ball, the idea is pretty much the same. By replacing a desk chair with a stability ball, you may burn more calories due to more movement from trying to balance on the ball. Since core muscles are needed to ensure you stay upright, your core muscle strength may also increase. Some also report that using a ball versus a chair has helped to relieve back pain.

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However, it's important to note that since there are no arm rests or back rests, there is limited upper-body support, so paying attention to proper posture is key. Also, you will need something to anchor the ball so it does not roll away. For best practices, start by using the stability ball in small time increments. Even when you get the hang of it, you should still go back and forth between ball and chair. The size of your stability ball also matters based on your height, so consider sizing options prior to purchase.

Standing Desks

Standing desks are another alternative to your standard desk chair and are a hot topic among the ergonomic community. Potential advantages of standing desks include increased attention, focus and productivity. There may also be more calories burned versus sitting due to more movement. Like the stability ball, some users experience a decrease in back pain due to better posture. While using a standing desk, it's imperative to wear

proper shoes and have a proper mat to stand on. Form is also a key factor in the success of the desk. While standing may be better than sitting, regular and periodic movement should still be considered, as standing can be quite sedentary and over several hours can pose its own risks. Standing desks aren't necessarily a one-size-fits-all solution; it may not be best for laptop users due to the angle of the screen and keyboard.

Treadmill Desks

If standing desks are hot right now, treadmill desks are on fire. These desks are gaining popularity because they involve more movement than your standard desk chair, stability ball or standing desk. Some studies indicate that treadmill desk users average about 2,000 more steps per day than traditional desk users. Similar to standing desks, proposed benefits include better concentration and alertness, as well as a reduction in stress and anxiety. Although there may be an adjustment period, tasks on the

treadmill desks are actually considered to be easier than one would think.

However, the adjustment may not be as easy for the folks around you listening to the sound of the machine and your movement. It's important to consider a separate location away from open work spaces. In addition to noise, treadmill desks can usually take up quite a bit of space and prove to be quite costly. For best practices, consider proper footwear and wardrobe and current physical fitness level.

These options may not be available or relevant at your specific workplace. However, adding short bouts of movement throughout the day is beneficial for us all. Not only can it help decrease your physical health risks, it's a great way to refresh and recharge your energy. From doing calf raises while your lunch is in the microwave to doing a set of squats after your restroom break, small moves can make a big difference.

For more ideas on how to get moving at your desk [click here](#).

Mindful Minute

We now know that the proverbial saying "you are what you eat" isn't true in a literal sense. For example, eating fat doesn't necessarily make you fat, and dietary cholesterol has little impact on actual blood cholesterol . . . the list goes on. However, in terms of how our bodies feel and function, this adage may carry some clout. We've all experienced the jitters of caffeine, a sugar crash, sluggishness after a greasy meal, etc. Paying attention to how we feel when we eat certain foods can help us **tap into our body's knowledge about what we should be eating**. Here are some tips:



- **Be present when you eat.** Savor your bites and activate your senses, chewing slowing, enjoying the flavors and pausing between bites.
- **Consider starting a food journal** to keep track of what you eat as well as how you feel when you eat the item immediately, 30 minutes to an hour later and three hours later.
- **Take note of how you feel physically and emotionally.** Are you satisfied and energized, or are you feeling anxious, tired or weak? Apply this wisdom to future food choices and remember that one size does not fit all; what may work for others may not work for you.

- **Recognize that indulging on occasion can be a good thing.** Eating should be an act of joy and self-care. Making choices about food using our internal wisdom on when we are hungry and what would satisfy us can make us appreciate and enjoy those moments of treats and indulgence.

Staying in tune with your body's reaction to different foods can be life-changing and, in effect, can create a personalized, self-created guide for your eating choices and good health. You and your body know more than you may think; just listen to yourself and seek professional support for any chronic conditions or concerns.

On the Menu

Oat Milk

Recently, plant-based milk alternatives have become incredibly popular, and oat milk is leading the charge as next in line for this trend. It's naturally free of lactose, nuts, soy and gluten (if made from certified gluten-free oats), which makes it a good choice for people with food allergies or intolerances, as well as those following a vegan or dairy-free diet.

It's made similarly to other milk substitute products in that the oats are soaked, blended and strained of any byproduct. Since some of the nutritional value of oats is lost through the straining process, the milk is often enriched with nutrients such as calcium, potassium, iron, and vitamins A, B and D.

Potential benefits include:

- **Heart health.** Oat milk is high in beta-glucans, a soluble fiber that can form a gel-like substance inside your gut, which can bind to cholesterol and reduce its absorption.
- **Elevated mood, reduced oxidative stress, and healthy hair, nails and skin.** Oat milk is often fortified with B vitamins, such as riboflavin (B2) and vitamin B12. B vitamins are essential for optimal health and linked to numerous benefits.
- **Bone health.** Oat milk is often fortified with calcium and vitamin D, which can benefit your bones.

Due to its growing popularity, you can find oat milk in most grocery stores or online. Some coffee shops have started to carry the milk substitute as well. You can also make it at home, customizing it to your taste.



Keep It Fresh

After opening a carton of oat milk, it's best to consume within 7 to 10 days. Homemade oat milk may stay fresh for up to 5 days.

Homemade Oat Milk

Oat milk is incredibly easy to make at home. What's more, making your own allows you to choose the ingredients and avoid additives or thickeners that may be found in commercial products. Yet, it's important to note that a homemade variety may not provide as many nutrients as store-bought fortified options.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups water
- 1 cup rolled oats (gluten-free, if needed)
- 1 whole date, pitted
- 1 pinch salt
- Optional add-ins: cocoa power for chocolate milk and mixed berries for berry milk

Instructions:

Add all ingredients to a high-speed blender. Blend for 30 to 60 seconds until well combined. Scoop out a small sample with a spoon to test flavor/sweetness. If it's not sweet enough, add more dates. Cover a large mixing bowl or pitcher with a very thin towel or clean t-shirt and pour the mixture over it. A double strain may be necessary. Transfer to a sealed container and refrigerate. It will keep in the refrigerator up to five days. Shake well and enjoy cold. Do not heat.

Nutrition Info*

Per 1/2 cup serving

Calories	19
Total Fat	0.3g
Carbohydrates	3.4g
Fiber	0.1g
Protein	0.6g
Sodium	10mg

*Nutrition information is a rough estimate calculated with no additional add-ins and the oat "pulp" nutritional content removed.

Adapted from MinimalistBaker.com

Ask the Experts

Get to know the CBIZ Engagement & Wellbeing Consulting team as we ask our experts about their own personal journey to living a vibrant life. This month we sat down with Abby Carter, Trisa Nickoley and Tammie McCoy. Check out what they had to say.



Abby Carter,
Wellbeing Specialist

Known on our team as
The Orchestrator:
Attentive, Dedicated, Efficient



Trisa Nickoley,
Engagement & Wellbeing
Account Manager

Known on our team as The Quick Start:
Thorough, Diligent, Imaginative



Tammie McCoy,
Wellbeing Specialist

Known on our team as
The Good Citizen:
Principled, Prepared, Conscientious

Q: Research suggests we are happy and fulfilled when we are able to apply our strengths to our work to find purpose and meaning. How do you bring your unique strengths to work each day?

ABBY: Being dedicated to the planning process of events, tasks and programs is something I apply daily. I'm very detail oriented, so I like to create processes that make planning and implementing programs easier and more efficient.

TRISA: I'm driven by opportunities that allow for creativity and attention to detail. Knowing these are my strengths, I address clients' needs with imaginative thinking, while executing a plan with focus and determination to get solutions and projects delivered on time.

TAMMIE: I am very dependable and detailed oriented, and I do my job with a sense of sincere warmth and dedication to my organization and coworkers.

Q: There is an increasing trend to equalize the focus on mind and body in wellbeing. Are there any practices related to this mind-body connection that you are interested in right now?

ABBY: Sound healing. I had a sound healing (singing bowl) session the day I went into labor. It helped speed up the process and reduced pain. My acupuncturist has also recommended Binaural Beats, a form of sound healing that uses specific frequencies to help promote deep relaxation and healing. I listened to them in the background when I had a nasty cold recently and it helped my symptoms.

TRISA: The brain-body connection has always been fascinating to me! My yoga instructor has recently introduced our class to what is called the [Kirtan Kriya](#) – a meditation that uses breath, posture and mudras (or hand signals), along with a sung mantra. It's a total mental health reset button, helping with memory, mood and anxiety just to name a few benefits.

TAMMIE: I use the [Calm](#) app for times when I am not able to fall asleep and need some assistance relaxing. My 11-year-old daughter and I like the sleep sounds and sleep stories.

Q: What role does technology play in your wellbeing? Specifically, are there any apps, blogs or online programs you recommend?

ABBY: I'm a foodie and love to find recipes on Instagram. [Whole30 recipes](#), [Eating Bird Food](#), and [skinnytaste](#) are some of my favorites. For gentle movement, I've been impressed with [Lee Holden's online Qigong](#) programs. To track my finances, I love the [Mint](#) app.

TRISA: I love listening to podcasts during my commute. There are a couple that I really enjoy. Daily Dose of Weird News highlights news stories with a comedic twist. Oprah's SuperSoul Conversations is always an inspiring way to start my day; she interviews thought-leaders, best-selling authors, spiritual luminaries, as well as health and wellness experts.

TAMMIE: Workout videos on YouTube. I get up early in the morning, walk down to my basement where we have a workout room with a television, go to YouTube, find an exercise video and do my workout. [FitnessBlender](#) is typically my go-to choice.



Q: What is your single most important self-care ritual – the one thing you do for yourself that is non-negotiable?

ABBY: Sleep! As a new mom, this is hard, but I always make sure I have a minimum of 8 to 10 hours carved out at night. It doesn't matter how well I eat or how smart I exercise, if I'm sleep deprived, I don't feel well.

TRISA: Getting monthly massages is how I treat myself! I hold a lot of my stress in my shoulders and upper back so this allows for the knots to get smoothed out, and I leave feeling refreshed and light. I also love working out, so this helps with injuries and faster recovery to tackle the next workout.

TAMMIE: Meal prepping on Sunday afternoons. I know it may sound like work, but it is time that I put my headphones on and listen to my favorite podcasts. I bake chicken, prepare salads and snacks for the week, and prep as much of my kids' lunches as I can.

Q: When it comes to tending to your own wellbeing, what area proves to be the most difficult for you and why?

ABBY: Finding time, especially to exercise, since I now have a tiny (adorable) human to take care of. I'm having to get more creative and change my perspective. Instead of a run or an hour of yoga, it might be a couple minutes of squats/lunges every few hours, or using a hula hoop while entertaining my baby.

TRISA: I love working out; however, during the winter months I become less motivated and find myself running for a warm blanket. During this time of year I utilize friends for accountability, attend group classes such as [Orangetheory Fitness](#) or try something new such as aerial silks or dance lessons to keep it interesting.

TAMMIE: Making time to spend with friends. My home and work responsibilities typically take priority. I have made spending more time with friends as one of my "20 for 2020" goals.

Q: What is your favorite healthy snack or pantry staple?

ABBY: Protein balls. They're simple and easy to throw together using whatever you have on hand. I like a simple recipe of peanut butter, oats, honey and protein powder.

TRISA: Friends tell me I should open my own smoothie shop! I make sure they're naturally sweetened to help satisfy my sweet tooth without the guilt. I love to get creative and have made candy corn, gingerbread and better-than-tequila margarita flavors – all of which have no sugar or alcohol. It's also an easy way to increase vegetable and fruit intake.

TAMMIE: Plain Greek yogurt mixed with blueberries . . . yum! It's super easy and healthy, and the berries give a touch of sweetness without a ton of added sugar.

Q: What is your #1 piece of advice for optimal wellbeing?

ABBY: Prioritize social connections. Feeling supported and connected to others can have a remarkable impact on how you feel and operate in life.

TRISA: Always make time for play and laughter. I think as adults it's easy to lose that sense of play. It feels good to be silly and let your hair down.

TAMMIE: Be grateful. Focus on your blessings, especially when you are feeling down; it's bound to make you feel happier.

Help Protect Your Kids from E-cigarette Risks

If you thought today's generation of youth was "nicotine-proofed" from years of successful anti-smoking campaigns, think again. With youth e-cigarette use reaching Surgeon-General-declared epidemic levels, now is the time to get smart about e-cigarette risks.

Whether you call it vaping, JUULing or using an e-cig, the fact remains that e-cigarettes may be safer than cigarettes but are far from safe. The majority of youth e-cigarette users think they vaped only flavoring, not nicotine, the last time they used a product. The truth? Nearly all e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which poses specific risks for young people.

What's Risky about E-cigarettes?

Nicotine is a highly addictive substance, and it's particularly dangerous for youth and their developing brains. Early nicotine addiction can harm brain development and alter nerve cell functioning, especially during early childhood and adolescent stages of development. Youth and young adult e-cigarette users who weren't smokers in first place are four times more likely to start smoking cigarettes than their peers who don't use e-cigarettes.



The younger someone is when they start using nicotine, the harder it is to quit and the more likely they are to become addicted to nicotine or other substances down the road. No one envisions this path for any child, much less their own.

Resources for Families with E-cigarette Users

Evidence-based resources to help e-cigarette users of all ages quit and guide parents in supporting their children have been scarce – until now.

Truth Initiative® recently launched a unique set of resources, designed specifically for parents and their children, including:

- **Support for Youth.** Through a program called *This Is Quitting*, young people (ages 13-24) can access free text messages that provide daily guidance, inspiration and encouragement throughout their quit journey, tailored to their quit date. To enroll, they simply text DITCHJUUL to 88709. Since January 2019, over 40,000 young people have enrolled in *This Is Quitting*.
- **Support for Young Adults.** Through the *EX Program*, a digital quit-tobacco program developed by Truth Initiative in collaboration with the Mayo Clinic, young adult dependents (ages 18-25) receive text messages plus additional support. This support includes live-chat coaching with tobacco treatment specialists, an online community of current and former e-cigarette users, and free quitting medication.

- **Support for Parents.** Through the *EX Program*, parents of e-cigarette users can receive up to three weeks of daily text messages about nicotine addiction, ways to start a conversation with their child about quitting and on-demand support for stress. Additionally, the *EX Program* gives parents access to tobacco treatment specialists via live chat to answer questions about e-cigarettes and personal challenges with helping their child to quit. Since January 2019, more than 3,500 parents have subscribed to these text messages. To date, 93% of parents found the program helpful.

To learn more about the *EX Program*, visit theexprogram.com.

To learn more about *This Is Quitting*, visit thisisquitting.com.

Article contributed by Megan Jacobs, MPH, Managing Director of Product, Truth Initiative

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Contributing Writers

Abby StevensonEngagement & Wellbeing Consultant
Kelley ElliottEngagement & Wellbeing Account Manager
Joe OberoiEngagement & Wellbeing Account Manager

Special thanks to our guest author, Megan Jacobs, MPH,
Managing Director of Product, Truth Initiative

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