Q. Want a simple way to feel better and be healthier?

A. Move more and sit less the NEAT way.

**NEAT** is short for *non-exercise activity thermogenesis*. NEAT is the calories or energy your body burns or uses when you are active *throughout your day*.

If you sit a lot during your day — at a desk or computer, riding in a vehicle, watching TV — **now is the time to live the NEAT way**! Sitting may seem harmless but research shows it can shorten your life, even if you exercise most days of the week.

So what does it mean to live the NEAT way? Think of it as **sitting only when you have to and moving often during your day**. It also means adding more activity to your day and taking active breaks during long periods of sitting. The more you sit during the day, the more you should move around for the rest of the day. Continue reading this material to get ideas for how to live your NEAT life.

**Get up and get moving. And do it often.**

Research shows NEAT has many benefits. NEAT can:

- Help you live longer.
- Increase your energy level.
- Lower your blood pressure.
- Increase your mental clarity so you can think better.
- Improve your metabolism so you burn more calories. This can help with weight loss or maintaining your weight.
- Lower your risk of getting some diseases such as heart disease. And NEAT can help keep diseases from getting worse.

While NEAT does not replace regular exercise, it is just as important for your well-being. Exercise helps you develop and maintain physical fitness, and NEAT helps you feel better and be healthier. **Active people tend to live a longer, healthier life than inactive people.**

*Make every excuse…  
Find any reason…  
Look for every way...  
*to MOVE MORE.***

There are lots of ways to live a NEAT life. You can do this!
NEAT ideas for you and your family

- Move while watching TV, especially during commercials.
  - Walk around.
  - March in place.
  - Stretch.
  - Dance.
  - Do push-ups, sit-ups, toe touches, squats, lunges, or jumping jacks.
  - Lift hand weights, food cans, or other household containers.

- Think of household tasks as great calorie burners and muscle builders.
  - Clean and organize your house and garage.
  - Fold laundry. Iron clothes.
  - Do gardening and yard work.
  - Sweep your floors, patio, or porch.

- Dance while you listen to music, cook, and clean.

- Take the stairs. Make several trips.

- Walk around or balance on one leg while on the phone.

- When waiting in line, shift your weight from side to side.

- Take your dog for walks or volunteer to walk dogs at an animal shelter.

- Park further from a store’s entrance and then walk or jog there.

- Find ways to walk more as you do errands.

- Make walking part of your routine by taking a walk before or after dinner.

- Walk somewhere: to a friend’s house, the farmer’s market, or the store.

- Stroll around an art gallery or museum.

- Walk around the field, rink or court, if possible, as you watch your kids or grandkids play sports.

- Look for ways to be active during your leisure time such as hiking, biking, or swimming.

- Challenge friends and family members to move more. Go for walks. Plan active gatherings, such as playing football or Frisbee, or going dancing.

- Play a game of catch or tag.

- Play together at the park.

- Choose video games that require you to move.

- Challenge each other to become more active by tracking movement or steps.

- Use an activity tracker to measure your movement.
If you commonly sit throughout your workday and then sit more at home, challenge yourself to explore new habits. Increased movement can give you more energy and more restful sleep.

What ways can you and your family increase your NEAT activity?

NEAT ideas at work

- Walk or bike to work. If you ride the bus, get off a few stops early. If you drive, park a few blocks from your workplace.
- Have walking meetings whenever possible.
- Stand and shift your weight from side to side or pace while on the phone.
- Take a 5- to 10-minute break every hour from sitting to stand, stretch, walk around or get a drink of water. Set a timer to go off to remind you to move.
- Stand up to read an email once in a while.
- Take a walk during breaks. Walk to and from lunch. Or walk for half of your lunch break.
- Take the stairs whenever possible.
- Start a workplace walking group.
- Move trash/recycling receptacles to an area that requires you to walk to them.
- Walk to a restroom that is further away from your work area.

What ideas do you have for increasing your NEAT activity at work?

When there is movement in your body, there is movement in your life.
Every bit of movement matters!

These examples show the large changes in calories burned by moving more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your workday the old way</th>
<th>Calories burned</th>
<th>Your workday the NEAT way</th>
<th>Calories burned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park by your building, take elevator to your floor</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Park 5 blocks from your building, take stairs to your floor</td>
<td>80-120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make phone calls for an hour at desk</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Make phone calls standing and pacing, put notepad on bookcase or filing cabinet to take notes without bending down</td>
<td>100-130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-minute seated lunch</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Walk 30 minutes at lunch, sit to eat for 15 minutes</td>
<td>100-130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-hour seated meeting</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1-hour walking meeting</td>
<td>150-200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take elevator to ground floor, walk to car</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Take stairs to main floor of the building, walk to car</td>
<td>80-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total 85</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total 510-680</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House and yard work the old way</th>
<th>Calories burned</th>
<th>House and yard work the NEAT way</th>
<th>Calories burned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Order pizza for dinner and then snack on chips, use the computer, and go through mail while waiting for it</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Make dinner at home for 20 to 30 minutes</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait for cleaning service to clean floors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sweep or vacuum one room a day for 15 minutes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do laundry by taking clothes to and from dry cleaners</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Do laundry by ironing and folding clothes for 15 minutes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weed flower beds by spraying herbicide or calling a lawn service</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tend flower beds by pulling weeds, clipping stray grass, and raking out leaves and twigs for 20 to 30 minutes</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water garden, plants, and grass by turning on automatic sprinkler system</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Water garden, plants, and grass with a watering can and hose for 20 to 30 minutes</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let dog out by opening the door and checking that the electric fence is activated</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Take dog for a walk for 30 minutes</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total 53</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total 280</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Move a Little, Lose a Lot by James A. Levine, MD, PhD and Selene Yeager