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**The Key to Your Success
In Staying Healthy and Fit**

Incidental Exercise Activity Booklet



Featuring

- **A vault of information to embrace your energy and vitality**
- **Strategies on unlocking opportunities for wellness**
- **The keys to applying lateral thinking to incidental activity**
- **The combination code of how to work incidental activity into your daily routine**

Incidental Exercise

What does it mean?

Incidental exercise is the exercise gained from many simple daily tasks. These tasks may range from taking the stairs instead of the escalator, getting out of the car to go into the shop rather than the drive-through, or getting off the bus one stop early to walk a little further. In this day of modern and convenient living consider how incidental exercise has been taken out of many daily tasks, like changing the channel on the TV or using the clothes dryer instead of hanging washing out. The less we move through the day, the greater potential for inactivity and what comes with it, such as weight gain and diminishing levels of strength and fitness.

How does this relate to my work day?

Convenience has not only imposed itself into many areas of our personal life, the office environment has also been markedly affected. Consider daily scenarios that minimize activity such as emailing your colleague, who is down the hall, instead of walking to speak to them, or putting mail in the internal post instead of walking it over to the person. Even though our working day is busy and time is precious, our health is first and foremost. Consider how sedentary you may have become in your current job role. Are you suffering any daily soreness in the back, or any aching of joints? Do you get fatigued as the day wears on or sleepy in the afternoon craving a sugar or caffeine fix? Many of these signs come about from a basic lack of physical movement. Increasing your amount of incidental exercise in your day may help alleviate aches and pains, and also more importantly help give you a sense of energy, a feel of wellbeing and purpose to your day, ensuring that you are looking after your health in the best possible way that you can.

This booklet has been designed to give you little prompts to increase the amount of incidental exercise over your day. Don't delay, start your incidental exercise today and blitz your pains away! Make a plan of action using the tools in the centre of this booklet. And remember, Risk Management Section of the People Services Branch can always assist you with your wellbeing, as well as your Occupational Safety and Health welfare.

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**UNLOCK THE DOOR TO YOUR HEALTH AND
LONGEVITY TODAY!**

Workstation Stretching – A series of stretches that will help you feel remarkable!



1. Horizontal Arm Stretch

Slide your chair away from your desk for room. Clasp your hands together, then raise your arms to shoulder height, inhale and extend them fully turning your palms out. Exhale and lower your arms. Repeat this 3-4 times.

2. Vertical Arm Stretch

Lift your arms over your head, placing the back of one hand in the palm of the other. Keep your arms comfortably bent. Slowly bend to the right until you feel the stretch down your left side, return to the centre and then repeat on the left. Do this 3-4 times in each direction.

3. Forward Bend

Move to the front of your seat. Tighten your abdominal muscles and drop your head. Bend forwards slowly starting at the base of the neck and working all the way down. Let your arms hang down. Hold for a few movement, then unfold from the base of the spine upwards. Lift the head last.

4. Side Twist

Sit back on your chair. Tighten your abdominal muscles, then slowly turn to the left, placing both hands on the back of the chair as you turn. Use your right hand as a lever to help increase the turn—but do not force the twist. Hold for a few moments, then return to the centre and repeat on the other side. Do this once more.

5. Knee Bend

Keeping your abdominal muscles tight, lift your right knee. Gently grasp the top of your shin with both hands. Draw the knee slowly towards you and hold for a few moment, breathing normally. Release and repeat on the other left leg. Repeat twice more on each side.

6. Pelvic Rolling

Draw your chair into the desk. Roll your sitting bones backwards so that the arch of your lower back is exaggerated. Then flatten the back by rolling them forwards. Do this back-forward movement 3-4 times. Finish by sitting tall, with your tailbone tucked in. You can practice this exercise unobtrusively at any time.



Snatching Stretches



Don't waste a precious moment — put it towards your health!

A lot of downtime waiting for the kettle to boil, your lunch to heat up, or the photocopier or printer to run is wasted through the day and could be put towards some great incidental activity, particularly stretching breaks. Why not try these great stretches to keep you limber through the day.....



Calf stretches are great to help with blood circulating through the lower legs. Whilst sitting for long periods, calves get static and can increase the likelihood of cramping.



Quadriceps are the biggest power muscles for our legs and used when we change positions from sitting to standing, therefore giving quads a stretch out will really be of



The hip flexor group tends to shorten the longer we sit down and can pull awkwardly through the pelvis, resulting in lower back aches. Stretch these muscles regularly to return them to their optimal length.



Hamstrings can be troublesome to the lower back if not regularly stretched and cause tension through the spine by pulling at the pelvis. Regularly stretch these muscles to regain length.



Lumbar mobility is vastly impaired when sitting for long periods, unload the lower spine by gentle side to side movements to shift nutrients into the discs and remove



Relax and Refocus

Why is this important?

So much of our day is a constant rollercoaster of tasks, deadlines, meetings and commitments. We can feel burdened and stressed from lack of time to relax. Take a few moments to give some time back to yourself with this 2 minute meditation session, slotting these into the day to help you with your focus and clarity.

How to do your one minute meditation!

The most basic approach to meditation is to sit and relax and do nothing — it involves surrendering to the moment and watching yourself as a silent witness. If thoughts come to mind, passively observe these without adding anything to them. The key is to focus on your physiological being (such as your breathing or feel of the body) or creating a thought from a memory in the brain and focusing on this (such as a relaxing place or time in your life).

Another useful method of meditation is to lend special awareness to the breathing process as its thought the hara (just behind and below the belly button) is the energy centre of the body — that is why you see Buddha statues with a big belly.

“Sit quietly in your chair with both feet on the ground. Let your arms hang down your side and relax your shoulders. Keep your head upright. Now start to focus on the breathing in and out of the belly—eyes can remain open, half shut or fully shut (fully shutting your eyes can keep visual distractions away so its quite useful). Now work on making the breath bigger, deeper and longer and with every breath in push thoughts and images away in the brain. Focus only on how the breathing feels through the body and how the muscles soften and relax as you continue breathing. Spend some time with your breathing and then when you feel ready to come back to awareness, start to gently roll your shoulders backwards and normalize your breathing.”

Your focus should feel fresher and your mind should regain clarity.

Take the Stairs Instead



Did you know?

Stair climbing can burn up to 300 calories in just 30 minutes, depending upon your pace and body weight. It's an easy, low impact option to starting to get fit, whilst working all the key leg muscles and giving the heart a workout. So that's why its recommended to take the stairs instead....

Stairwork 101

Make sure you wear good cushioning sport footwear (cross trainers are best) and the stairs are well lit and ventilated. Undertake leg stretches and keep hydrated. Keep your posture upright rather than slouched and begin your stair climbing slowly with handrail support if needed. Gradually build your pace, number of steps and repetitions of flights.

One Step Wonder

Build up your heart rate by using only one step but varying your pace of stepping up and down. Give both legs equality in leading to evenly distribute your strength. Also use your arms to generate power and pace. Alternatively you can do strength training off one step using the step to do either an uneven lunge or squat, giving your legs some more strength.

Two Step Tango

When you gain fitness and confidence, you can challenge yourself by taking the steps two at a time. This will put extra loading through the leg muscles and burn more kilojoules.

Plyometric Power

Give yourself extra power and strength by using the step as an area to do a power squat jump on to. Start in a squat position with feet shoulder width apart, bend at the knees and swing with the arms to jump upwards onto the step. Make sure you bend your knees and soften your landing. This exercise can also be done in reverse.

The Running Man

When you gain with fitness and confidence, increasing your pace into a jog or run up and down stairs can be challenging. Ensure you protect your knees by bending into the movement when running down, as the legs work hard in this action acting as brakes.

Racing Pace

Why not get a colleague or some extras along for a stair climbing challenge, go head to head or two against two, the extras will make it fun and challenging.



Conditioning@Work!

A stitch in time saves nine...

How many times do you say to yourself through the day “I must get to the gym!” and work gets in the way? Now you can strengthen and condition in your own office without the need of attending a busy gym. Have a go at these great exercises using the surrounds of a typical office environment.....



Wall/door slides

- Slide your way to leg strength and endurance. Remember to ensure knees don't go over toes and not to go further than right angles.



Office lunges

- Take a fancy lunge walk to work your leg and bottom muscles. Great for postural and tummy work as you stabilize your trunk through the movement.



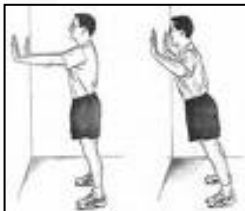
Standing leg swings / circles

- Leg swings can be done in a forward/backward motion or out to the side, ensure the trunk stays in good posture. Leg circles should be kept within the comfortable range of movement of the hips.



Standing calf raises -

- Calf raises strengthen up the calf muscles and can be loaded quite well with own body weight. Progress from a double calf raise to a single calf raise to really put on the power.



Standing wall presses -

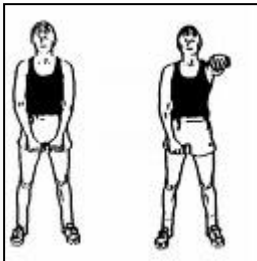
- Not only is strengthening our chest helpful to support our back, but we create some good sculpt and shape for our figure, these are a great exercise to do to get the blood flowing back through the muscles of the arms.

Conditioning@Work! Continued..



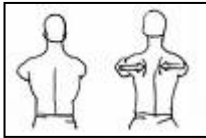
Tricep dips

- Using a firm chair or your desk, tailor your arm muscles to your liking with this tricep workout. Leg placement will make the exercise easier to harder.



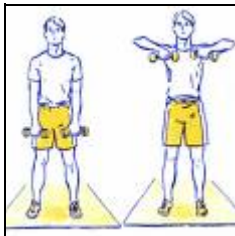
Front arm folder raises

- Using lever arch file or book, hold in one hand and raise your arm upwards keeping it straight. Great for the shoulder and chest muscles. Do one arm at a time or alternate arms. When really skilled try the both together.



Scapula Retraction

- An excellent postural exercise to help realign the shoulders and upper back. Gently squeeze the shoulder blades back together and downwards and



Upright rows

- Holding onto the spine of a sturdy book or file, draw the hands up under the chin ensuring the elbows lead the movement.



Seated knee lifts

- Sitting on your seat, one foot flat on foot. Contract the abdominals whilst you bring one knee up towards the ceiling. Alternate sides.



Make sure you get your conditioning in for the day, it's a great way for the body to be burning more kilojoules at rest if you activate all your muscles, and over time you shall get nice shape and tone!



INCIDENTAL ACTIVITY PLANNER

On your way to work:

At morning tea time:

At lunch time:

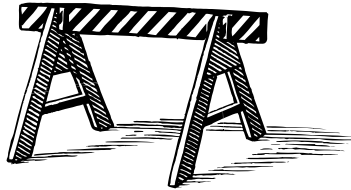
At afternoon tea time:

After work:

Throughout the day:

Overall Goals:

HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS



What strategies can help me overcome my barriers?



Bust a Manual Handling Move!

How can manual handling tone and condition my body?

When manual handling is done properly, the body works together in its biomechanics and muscle activation to achieve great things. With recruiting our leg, bottom and core muscles, we can really make manual handling not only functional but a great workout at the same time.....

Getting the right spinal shape

Manual handling can stay safe for us providing that we keep the spine in its most NEUTRAL position ie, maintaining our natural curvatures of the spine throughout the movement. Therefore make sure you keep your bottom out to maintain the lumbar curve and head up to maintain the cervical curve. REMEMBER, a spring loaded spine is a strong spine.

Lunge your legs into shape

Lunges are a great exercise for your legs as well as a smart way to pick up loads. Step up alongside the load with your legs in a stride position. Keeping your back straight, start to bend the knee of the back leg towards the ground. Establish your grip on the load (towards the midline of the body) and lift pushing up with the front leg and balancing with the back leg. Keep the back as neutral as possible through the movement.

Squat to sculpt and shape

Squatting makes the legs do the work and ensures that our back remains as safe as possible through the lift. A sound squat will ensure that you get nice and close to the load and floor. Start with your legs shoulder width apart with the feet placed close to the load. Bend your knees and keeping your back straight lower down towards the ground. Establish your grip on the load and when ready, dynamically push up through the legs. Keep the back as neutral as possible through the movement.

Abdominal Strengthening and Pelvic Floor Contractions

Did you know that activating your tummy muscles and pelvic floor are very important for safe lifting. If you envisage drawing in your belly button to make your abdominal muscles work, this will give your trunk more stability. By pulling your pelvic floor muscles inwards and upwards, more support will also be provided to the lower abdominal region. Tone your tummy through this great workout.



Flexibility Fun

Fabulous flexibility!

Flexibility is your friend to help you keep nimble and able. As we are sedentary and inactive through the day, our joints can seize up and ache as well as our muscles tighten and shorten. Keep your longevity by trying these simple flexibility exercises throughout the day (as adapted from from www.abc-of-yoga.com):



Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

The Mountain Yoga Pose promotes the experience of stillness, strength, relaxed power, and immovable stability associated with mountains. This Yoga posture, and coming back to this stillness after other poses, is one of the ways of becoming acquainted with stillness.



Triangle Pose (Trikonasana)

In Hindu art, the triangle is a potent symbol for the divine principle, and it is frequently found in the yantras and mandalas used for meditation. Keep a wide base of support and lengthen through the arms.



Crescent Moon Pose

The Crescent Moon Pose stretches and strengthens the arms and legs, increases stamina, improves balance and concentration, and can also relieve backaches. If you are suffering from diarrhea, high blood pressure or neck problems, you should take extra caution practicing this pose.



Warrior Pose II (Virabhadrasana II)

This posture strengthens your legs, back, shoulders, and arms, building stamina. It opens your hips and chest, and improves balance. It is called the Warrior in reference to the fierce warrior, an incarnation of Shiva.



Warrior Pose III (Virabhadrasana III)

Warrior Pose III is the third variation of Virabhadrasana. This pose helps improve balance and stability while strengthening your ankles and legs.



Chair Pose I (Utkatasana I)

A strong straight lower back is the foundation of every correct position. In doing the Chair Pose, you strengthen the lower back and the legs and by doing so, you create more space in the chest and belly.



Standing Forward Bend (Uttanasana)

Doing a Standing Forward Bend can completely stretch your upper and lower back as well as your calf muscles and legs. In addition, it can help increase the flow of brain in the brain.



Postural Paradigm

Why should we ponder about our posture?

Over time, we can get into poor postural habits and develop exaggerations in our normal spinal positions. Some of these may include a chin or head poke forward or a more marked sway to the lumbar part of our back. Identifying our postural problems initially can help us construct a plan of action.

What is my posture like?

Ask a colleague to do a mini postural assessment on you. Stand in your natural still state whilst they investigate the following:

- Position of your shoulders (are they level, or is one higher than the other?)
- Position of your hips (are they even?)
- Curvatures of your spine, are they natural and normal—does the spine have a scoliosis (a sideways curvature?)
- Position of your head, is it level on your spine or forward

Spine imbalance can be seen by positioning of the above areas. It may be that you have imbalance in your trunk (weight on the tummy) which may influence your lumbar curvature, or a habit of putting the head forward. Unevenness can be seen by shoulders or hips being higher, do you always carry bags on one side perhaps?

Postural Challenges

As in the movie “My Fair Lady”, it’s an exercise to improve our postural curvatures. Why not try balancing a paper plate on your head and altering your posture to keep it balanced there, better still walk around your office and sit at your work station whilst aiming to keep that plate balanced.

Plate Problems?

As the spine is one organ, every part influences another part. If you are having trouble balancing your plate check and action the following:

- Position of your shoulders (do they need to be pulled back?)
- Distribution of weight on the ground (are you leaning on one side?)
- Excessive curvatures of the spine, either through the thoracic or lumbar?



Engage your eyes!

Suffering from eye strain?

Long hours in front of the computer can impact negatively on our eyesight and focus. Do you experience headaches, eyestrain or even blurred vision? These may be indicators to give your eyes an exercise break. Why not try these fun exercises to give your eyeballs some renewed energy....

Exercise 1

Sit in a comfortable position. Cover your eyes with the palms of your hands but don't press into the eyes. Try to relax and watch the darkness for 30 seconds whilst focusing on deep and quiet breathing.

Exercise 2

Sitting in the same position, look up and hold for 5 seconds. Then release. Now look down for 5 seconds and then release. Make 5 repetitions.

Exercise 3

Close your eyes tightly and hold for 5 seconds and then release, next hold open your eyes as widely as you can, hold for 5 seconds and relax. Make 5 repetitions.

Exercise 4

Imagine you are standing in front of a really big clock. Look at the middle of the clock, then look at the first hour mark without turning your head. Look back at the centre. Then look at the next hour mark and go around the clock to the 12 o'clock number using the above technique.

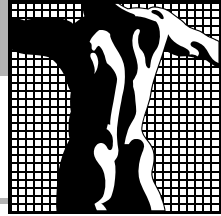
Exercise 5

Look at a big wall in front of you and pretend you are writing with your eyes, without turning your head, start by writing your name. It might seem difficult but with practice it's fun, the bigger the letters the better the effect.

Exercise 6

Focus on an object far away from you for several seconds and then slowly focus on an object nearby that's in the same direction. Focus for several seconds and then go back to the distant object. Make 5 repetitions of this exercise.

It's more important to do the exercises regularly rather than do them over a long period. Staring out to distance can relieve sore eyes as well as splashing with cool water. Look after your eyes as you will need them all your life!



Core stability through your workday

What is core stability?

The core of the body refers to the muscles of the back, abdominal region and trunk which strengthen your midline area and help support your spine. These include; erector spinae, multifidus, obliques, transverse abdominis. Also many key muscles of the bottom and legs also work to support your spine. There are many ways to train the core so as to better protect your back and strengthen it through dynamic work activities.

How to get started....

Firstly consider activating your abdominal region by trying some bracing. This is the main technique used during core exercise training. To correctly brace, you should attempt to pull your naval back in towards your spine. This action primarily recruits the transverse abdominis. Try not to hold your breathing—you should be able to practice to breath smoothly whilst bracing.

Plank exercise

Hold a straight body position supported on elbows and toes. Brace the abdominals and maintain a straight line through the feet, hips and head. Hold for 5-10 seconds, relax and repeat. Build up repetitions.



Side plank exercise

Lie on one side, ensuring the top hip is above the bottom hip. Push up until there is a straight body line through the feet, hips and head. Keep the elbow under the shoulder. Lower under control and repeat. on other side.



Bridging

Lie on the floor with your feet flat and knees bent. Squeeze your gluteals and then push your hips up until there is a straight line through knee and hip to upper body, shoulders on the floor.



Superman

Kneel on the floor and place your hands below your shoulders and your knees below your hips. Extend the right leg back and the left arm forward at the same time. Maintain a straight body line through the extended leg, body and extended arm. Repeat with opposite limb.



WALKING TALKING MEETINGS



Why not walk to talk?

Walking is a great overall fitness activity and can burn a few extra kilojoules as apposed to sitting stationary in a chair through a meeting. Consider what topics are best discussed on the move and how you will best capture the information discussed—perhaps a dictaphone or putting ideas down straight after the walk on the email....

All walking ain't equal

If you wish to make this a regular activity, keep a spare pair of walking shoes under your desk for such an occasion. Walking is far more efficient with the right footwear. Also make sure you engage your colleague/s for the task so they can do the same.

Pacing it out

If you wish to pace it out for your walk, use footpath or bike path that is close to you. Make sure you watch for hazards such as other path users and pedestrians. A hat and sunblock is also a good idea. Aim to build momentum to a pace where you feel a light sweat or heavier breathing. Make sure you utilize your full stride length to optimize the energy burn. You should still be able to maintain conversation at this pace.

Terrain training

Why not try some grassed areas to burn a few extra kilojoules. Research shows that walking on grass or in sand can burn up to twice the energy as burnt off a hard surface. This is because the calf muscle works harder to reduce slipping on these kinds of surfaces.

Hills to heighten the kilojoule burn

Hill work is particularly useful for pushing up the heart rate, and making the muscles work a bit harder, thus burning more energy. Why not pick some graded slopes around your work area, or use the stairs instead to mimic hill work. Your body will thank you for it later.

**A working walking meeting will not only clear your head
but renew your focus — try it today!**

Laughter Medicine



Humour has it!

Can a laugh a day keep the heart attack away? Maybe so.... Research conducted by a group of cardiologists in the States has shown likely correlations between heart disease and sadness leading to mental stress (including anger and hostility). A greater amount of happiness and humour in one's life may be in-fact protective against Coronary Heart Disease Risk.

How to incorporate humour in your day

Humour could be easily incorporated into a daily schedule, like any other physical health activity such as walking or taking the stairs. A person may deliberately watch a funny video, or read a funny article to embrace this into their routine.

How to stress less

Laughter is an overall physical and emotional release. It can positively reframe your mind and also change your perspective. Laughter is also a great way to practice anti-stress measures. It is by far one of the best muscle relaxants and helps distribute blood by expanding vessels and sending it to the extremities. A good bout of laughter also effectively reduces levels of stress hormones including epinephrine and cortisol. Laughter also demands more oxygen use through the body, so it's a very aerobic exercise. Laughter also increases the amount of endorphins in our body, therefore increasing the levels of natural pain killers.

Keep it clean

Humour is a great way to lift the spirits in any section or branch but must be used with care. Bear in mind any humour which could be considered offensive or of poor taste could be taken as harassment, victimization or bullying. Therefore, humour is fine to share with other staff members as long as it is not classed this way.

**Remember, laughter is contagious so share the fun
and joy and make your day brighter :)**



Right Brain / Left Brain Exercises

Training the Brain

It's not a strange idea to consider that the brain, like any muscle of the body needs to be used to improve. Training the brain with specific conditioning makes the brain a stronger entity and improves memory, concentration and thinking.

Brain Exercising 101

There are many fun and challenging ways to train the brain and provide strong links between both hemispheres, try a few below:

Drink Up!

Did you know the brain has the most water compared to any other organs in the body? Dehydration and stress can impact on our concentration negatively, so keep your brain well lubricated.

Cross Crawl

This exercise helps coordinate the left and the right brain together by creating information flow between the two hemispheres. It can be done either sitting or standing. Put the right hand across the body to the left knee and then do the same thing for the left hand to the right knee as if you were marching. Do this for around 2 minutes.

Toe Tappin, Knee Slappin Exercise

Try this exercise to really connect both your brains together. Raise and tap one front knee with the opposite hand and then kick back the opposite leg and tap the foot with the opposite hand. Change over sides and try to gain a flow with the activity.

Circles and Figure Eights

A challenging exercise! Lift one leg whilst seated and make circles with the foot whilst trying to draw a figure eight in the air with the opposite hand. It may take some concentration but it can be done.

Variety is the the spice of life...

In general try something different everyday, no matter how little. Perhaps talk to a different colleague or ask an unexpected question or find out something new about a different subject, the brain is meant for learning and experiencing new and interesting experiences!



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