
Are You Still Sitting Down?



Sedentary occupations have received increasing attention recently, with some countries even starting campaigns to encourage fitter workplaces, as [evidence increases about the health risks](#).

Should radiologists be concerned, as many by necessity spend hours sitting at desk-bound workstations and in reading rooms? David L. Lamar, MD, and colleagues studied the issue at their institution in Seattle by comparing the at-work activity levels of radiology, paediatric and internal medicine residents as well as surveying all department members. In addition they compared radiology residents based on a reading-room based diagnostic rotation and an interventional procedures rotation. They also evaluated radiology residents' knowledge of and use of tools that allow activity. These include dynamic radiology workstations that allow standing, walking or running or biking while working. Their findings are reported in *Current Problems in Diagnostic Radiology*.

Results

89 out of 169 (53%) recipients returned the survey. Over three-quarters (78%) estimated that they sat for at least 6 hours during the work day. Other sedentary activity included computer use and home entertainment as well as commuting. However, work was where 81% of respondents spent most time sitting.

The data from the activity monitors used by the residents revealed that the radiology residents took fewer steps per work day and work hour than the residents followed in paediatrics and internal medicine. Radiology residents at work averaged only 2257 steps per day (55% of the total taken by non-radiologists) and 294 steps per hour (68% of the total taken by non-radiologists). They also found that the radiology residents spent >6 hours per work day without registering a step, which is comparable to office workers. Although the facility has dynamic sitting or standing PACS workstations available, few residents routinely used them.

See Also: [Radiologists Benefit from Standing Workstations](#)

The authors recommend further research to identify the most effective strategies to increase radiologists' activity without negatively affecting the efficiency of daily workflow. They also note that there is limited research suggests that walking on a treadmill while reading studies does not affect diagnostic performance.

Get Up, Stand Up or When It's OK to Fidget

The authors suggest some simple measures that radiologists can take:

- Take frequent walk breaks
- Alternate diagnostic and procedural duties when possible
- Use a dynamic workstation - some models can be adjusted between standing and sitting. Also treadmills and stationary bikes can be used at workstations.

Sameer Mittal, MD and Jason Hoffmann, MD, who [presented a storyboard exhibit](#) at the 2015 Radiological Society of North America meeting, suggested a number of basic exercises to incorporate into the work routine. These relate to non-exercise activity thermogenesis (NEAT) :

- Leg lifts
- Seated spinal twists
- Side stretches
- Neck rolls
- Intermittently stand while dictating
- Incorporate fidgeting
- Tap your foot
- Drink water (out of a smaller container to force walking to the water cooler)
- Walk and park further away
- Take the stairs
- Aim for 10,000 steps per day

[Mayo Clinic has provided some tips](#), as has the [National Health Service in the UK](#), and several countries now have campaigns to get people standing - see links below. *The Guardian* has published some [easy exercises to try at home](#) for desk-based workers.

Links

[Get America Standing](#)
[Get Australia Standing](#)
[Get Britain Standing](#)
[Get Canada Standing](#)
[Get Europe Standing](#)
[Get Ireland Standing](#)

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