



Bowel health

Our digestive system is set up to provide us with the energy and nutrients we need for our bodily functions to perform at their best. Bloating, constipation, fatigue and more serious conditions such as bowel cancer, all point to the need to look after our digestive system.

Close to 41,000 men and women are diagnosed with bowel cancer each year, making it the 3rd most common cancer type in the UK.

Tips for optimal digestive health include:

- ▶ Aim for 30g of daily dietary fibre
- ▶ Get your 5-a-day fruit and veg
- ▶ Limit your intake of refined foods and processed meats such as ham, bacon and sausages
- ▶ Stay hydrated – lack of fluids can slow digestion
- ▶ Keep active – a sedentary lifestyle can contribute to constipation
- ▶ Focus on managing your daily stress levels. Excessive stress can cause slowing of the digestive system or, for some people, acceleration of the process (diarrhoea)

Increasing daily activity levels at work

20 million adults in the UK are currently not meeting the recommended guidelines for physical activity. As a consequence of our sedentary lifestyle, it's estimated that this could be costing the economy around £1.2 billion a year.

Considering the hours we spend commuting to and from work and carrying out our job when we get there, our work lives are an obvious area to focus on when it comes to increasing our daily activity levels.

Here are some ideas and tips to encourage more workplace activity:

- ▶ **Team challenges:** weekly/monthly/yearly walking challenges and walking groups, with rewards for best team, individual etc.
- ▶ **Get involved with national health events:** The British Heart Foundation's 'MyMarathon' event is in May, which encourages people to complete the marathon distance of 26.2 miles over the course of the month.
- ▶ **Look at ways to change daily work tasks:** eg. use printers that are furthest away from your desk; encourage bathroom breaks on different floors of the building; incentives for employees to cycle, walk, run to work or at lunch time.

Small changes in daily habits to include more physical activity and less sedentary behaviour can result in reduced health risks. Why not introduce health messages around your workplace providing little tips on how and why activity changes could benefit your employees?

Quote of the month

“ You have little, if any, control of thoughts or feelings. But you can exert some control as to whether or not you engage them. This sounds simple and easy, but it's not; it's an enormous challenge. ”

- Brad Stulberg



Facts of the month

30g of fibre is the recommended daily intake for adults in the UK.



Food of the Month

Oats: A high fibre food. 1 serving of oats (40g) provides 3.5g of fibre. As well as being great for bowel health, oats may also help reduce cholesterol levels.

TIP - Add some berries and a small amount of nuts to your oats to help provide additional fibre and nutrient value.