

Get Up and Move!

Are you sitting all day in front of the computer or television, desk or behind the wheel? Have you even thought about what all that sitting is doing to your liver? Probably not.

Prolonged sitting has been linked to an increased risk of fatty liver disease. Why? One of the most common causes of fatty liver disease in Canada is obesity and an inactive lifestyle.

Researchers are continuously finding that reducing the amount of time spent sitting while increasing the amount of time engaged in physical activity is vital for our overall well-being. The human body is designed to move, so it is not surprising that sedentary behaviour, characterized by a low amount of muscle activity, has a negative effect on our physiology. With so few medical treatments currently available for fatty liver disease and many other liver diseases, lifestyle change is the number one prescription to lessen the risk.

So, what does that mean if you are a person who sits for most of the day? Simple. You need to move more! How? Here are a few ideas for you to consider:

1. **Set a goal.** For example, decide that you'll be active for 20-30 minutes each day or 150 minutes a week. This will help you stay on track. Challenge your friends, family, or coworkers and see who can consistently meet their goals over time. Friendly competition never hurt anyone!
2. **Schedule it into your day.** Set an alarm on your phone or write it on your calendar. Treat it like any other important appointment.

And when the time comes to move, what should you do? Here are some suggestions:

- Put some music on and walk briskly around the house or up and down the stairs for 10-15 minutes 2-3 times per day.
- Dance to your favorite music.
- Walk or jog around your neighborhood.
- Be active in a local park. Spending time in nature may enhance immune function.
- Play active games with your family.
- Perform some virtual yoga. Deep breathing and mindfulness can also reduce anxiety.
- Find ways to do some simple muscle strengthening movements around your house or office.

These could be:

- Squats or sit-to-stands from a sturdy chair
- Push-ups against a wall, the kitchen counter or the floor
- Lunges or single leg step-ups on stairs

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- If you're watching TV, get up during every commercial (or periodically), and do a lap around your home, or do an active chore. For example, throw some clothes in the laundry, do the dishes or take out the garbage. You will feel productive after just one show!
 - Perform some daily stretches while at home or work.

If you choose an activity that is fun for you, you're more likely to stick with it, so glance over our list for some ideas, but don't be afraid to add your own. As long as you're moving your body, you're moving in the right direction!
