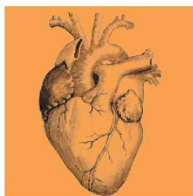


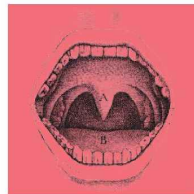
It was nothing for the average hunter-gatherer woman to walk 9km every day, and the average man those days clocked up about 15km of walking and running daily

time to sidestep the harm. For now, she suggests that we get up for a few minutes at least every half hour.

Even just standing will help, Dr Healy says, but walking around could offer extra protection. She mentions her team's findings that interrupting sitting every 20 minutes with two minutes of walking might keep sugar and insulin levels in the blood healthy, potentially reducing disease risk. Another study, this one conducted earlier this year by scientists at the University of Utah School of Medicine, found that replacing two minutes of sitting with walking each hour was associated with a 33% lower risk of an early death.



when you sit too much ... Muscles burn less fat and blood flow decreases, upping your risk of heart disease and high blood pressure.



when you sit too much ... Even though it burns hardly any kilojoules, prolonged sitting doesn't tend to reduce your appetite – in fact, it can prompt mindless munching, promoting weight gain.

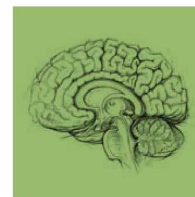
So, if walking is better than standing, could fitting in an after-work session of an even more strenuous activity, like running, keep desk workers safe? While working out has so many perks for your body and mind, if you spend the rest of the day seated – especially in uninterrupted bouts – you'll still be at risk of developing diseases associated with too much sitting, Dr Healy warns. "So go to the gym, but also think of your activity *throughout* the day. Keep changing your posture. If you've been sitting, stand. If you've been standing, move. If you've been moving, sit ..."

No excuses

While we may be programmed to move, we're not all hard-wired to enjoy exercise, Prof Lieberman points out. So we might need to push ourselves to get up and about. Wanting to avoid co-workers' sneers and perceptions that we're slacking off could also keep us in our seats – but boldly take a stand and you might just start an office-wide health movement.

Here, tips that make fitting activity into our 9–5 lives easier:

- Look for opportunities to move. Walk during your lunch break, stand while talking on the phone and invite your workmates to join you for walk-and-talk meetings. Fidgeting



when you sit too much ... Your chances of anxiety, depression, brain fog and fatigue increase.