

Limited evidence for benefits of interventions to reduce sitting at work**Clinical Question**

How effective are workplace interventions to reduce sitting at work?

Bottom Line

For changes in the physical environment, there was very low quality evidence that the use of sit-stand desks can reduce workplace sitting time by about 30 minutes to two hours per day over short term follow-up. This is considerably less than the two to four hours recommended by experts. There was no substantial effect on musculoskeletal symptoms or on work performance. There is no evidence on longer term effects. Walking strategies had no effect on workplace sitting, while computer prompting plus information had an inconsistent effect. There were no substantial effects of other interventions such as changing work organisation, active workstations (treadmill or cycle) or information and counselling. For interventions combining multiple approaches, there was an inconsistent effect on sitting time with a significant reduction at 12 weeks' and six months' follow-up but not at 12 months' follow-up.

Caveat

The quality of evidence was very low to low for most interventions, mainly because studies were very poorly designed and because they had very few participants.

Context

Office work has changed considerably over the previous couple of decades and has become sedentary in nature. Physical inactivity at workplaces and particularly increased sitting has been linked to an increase in cardiovascular disease, obesity and overall mortality.

Cochrane Systematic Review

[Shrestha N et al. Workplace interventions for reducing sitting at work. Cochrane Reviews, 2016, Issue 3. Art. No.: CD010912.DOI: 10.1002/14651858. CD010912.pub3.](#) This review contains 20 studies involving 2,180 participants.