Standing Work Stations

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View from the Hill

With a new year upon us , we often find ourselves looking for ways to improve our fitness. So what if you had the option of both sitting or standing at your desk?

It’s a choice some WKU employees will soon get to make and it may very well save their lives as Amy Bingham explains in this week’s View from the Hill.

Did you know sitting at a desk all day puts you at the same risk for a heart attack as someone who smokes? Sedentary jobs are literally killing us. That’s where sit/stand work stations come into play.

Dr. Mark Schafer \ Assoc. Prof., School of Kinesiology

Tony Glisson \Dir., Human Resources

Wade Pinkard \ Mgr., Employee Wellness

 “You will be able to sit down when you want to sit down and perform some work and you’ll be able to pull these levers and pull desk up and use it in standing position.”

Dr. Mark Schafer in the School of Kinesiology, Recreation and sport loves his sit/stand workstation.

 “I get tired of sitting and get antsy and just changing my position and standing up helps how my body feels, my neck and back and how I’m able to concentrate.”

Schafer’s department will collaborate with Ergotron to have 30 sit/stand work stations installed for employees this semester.

 “We are really hopeful and optimistic these desks can help people make lifestyle changes even if they are small lifestyle changes to be more active and less sedentary.”

Human Resources and WKU’s Wellness program will also be collaborating on the research project.

 “It was a unique opportunity to work with an academic unit to promote and assist with research questions but also to promote our healthy research initiative.”

Dr. Schafer says you can’t underestimate the negative impact that sitting all day has on your health. Rising blood sugar, decreased circulation and back and leg aches to name a few.

 “This is an intervention that brings about change and helps them change in position.”

 “Just a change in position has positive health benefits of reducing risks for major disease.”

With 86 percent of Americans currently sitting all day on the job, this type of option couldn’t have come at a better time.

 “From a health promotion or employee wellness perspective, this dovetails right into Top Life wellness goals on improving and maintaining employee health.”

 “It may seem like a small thing to people but small changes add up to big things.”

WKU did an initial pilot study exploring the feasibility of treadmill desks and standing workstations on campus last year. Those findings will be presented at two upcoming conferences. This new research will build on that and will extend to students in the fall semester.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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