



10 tips for a healthier & happier workplace

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The new working year is now in full swing and some people will be back at work in less than ideal offices. But help is at hand.

Richard Andrews, Managing Director of Inspiration Office, an Africa-wide office space and furniture consultancy, said "Making even small tweaks can make the workplace a more comfortable and pleasant experience in 2017 and beyond."

These are his top 10 suggestions for reducing the risk of injury and improving workplace wellbeing:

1. Bin the ball

It has become quite trendy to sit on an exercise ball while at your desk. The truth is they are uncomfortable and impractical. The best bet is a comfortable, ergonomic chair.

2. Get the screen right

To reduce eye and neck strain, raise your screen so that your eyes are looking directly at it when you are sitting normally. Most people tend to look down at their screens placing particular strain on the neck. If budget allows, a computer monitor arm will help workers easily set the screen at an optimal height.

3. Remember a wrist rest for keyboards

Writing on a keyboard for long periods can place unnatural strain on the wrists. Adding a wrist rest is a quick and cost effective and ergonomically sound solution.

4. Light up, light down

An adjustable worklamp on the desk is a boon for workers so they can control their immediate lighting. This can help with controlling glare on computer screens and illuminating work when necessary.

5. Sit and stand

Vary your posture between sitting and standing. Many offices now offer place where you can stand and work. Standing meetings are another option. It tends to keep them short.

6. Move - but treadmills are for gyms

To stay active, it's best to take short walks throughout the day. Lunch breaks are good times. It helps with clearing the mind and reduces body stiffness from sitting too long in one position.

7. Rest your eyes at regular intervals

To reduce eyestrain from staring at a computer monitor for long spells, add rest breaks to refocus and rest your eyes. It often helps to look at the far distance during these breaks.

8. Expose yourself to sunlight

Long hours under artificial light can sour the mood of even the sunniest characters. It's a good idea to work in a sunny spot or at least walk through a sunny area a few times a day.

9. Surround yourself with plants

Place plants in your workplace or visit greenery during the work day. Plants are proven to reduce stress and increase productivity.

10. View the outdoors if you can

Not an option for everyone but if you can look at a natural setting while working at your desk, it improves memory and focus. If it's not possible, even looking at images of nature throughout the day will help create a sense of wellbeing.