

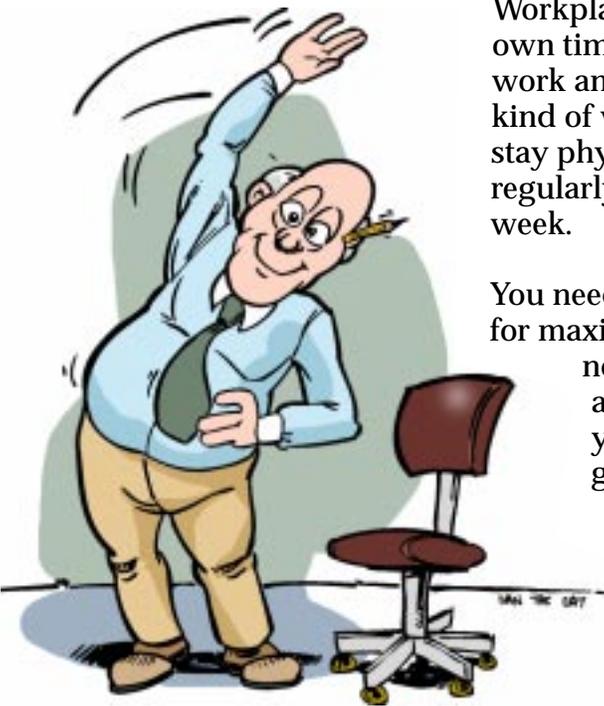
# Ergonomics

## Warm Up To Fitness

Athletes know the value of warming up before workouts and competitions. This is how they avoid injuries and do their best.

Workplace athletes also need to warm up. The chance of muscle strains and sprains can be lessened by getting limbered up before working.

Take a few minutes to prepare before you jump right into your job. If you are going to lift something, stretch and flex



your arms, shoulders, back and legs. Move around to loosen muscles and get your circulation going. Before your fingers hit the keyboard, flex and stretch your hands and wrists. Start off slowly and take a few moments to build your speed.

Take quick breaks to stretch and relax between tasks or in the middle of lengthy jobs. Take all of your scheduled breaks and use them as opportunities to get up and walk around, stretch and loosen your tense muscles. Workplace fitness starts on your own time. To do your best work and to avoid injury in any kind of work, it is important to stay physically fit. Exercise regularly, at least several times a week.

You need three types of exercise for maximum fitness. First, you need what is known as aerobic exercise to keep your heart and lungs in good shape. This kind of exercise can help prevent serious illnesses such as heart disease, and it can also

increase your endurance. Brisk walking, running, swimming, biking and dancing are examples.

Second, you need stretching exercises to keep your muscles and joints flexible. These exercises increase your range of motion, and help prevent injuries. Warm-up and cool-down routines usually include stretching exercises. Yoga is another kind of stretching exercise.

Third, you need to keep your muscles strong. Use of fitness machines and weights is a popular way to increase muscle strength, but many common exercises and activities also put the muscles to work. Strong muscles in your back and abdomen are an important defense against back injury.

*Physical fitness can help guard against injuries. Follow an exercise routine, and remember to warm up before starting physical work.*