

Be More Active the NEAT Way

Move more, sit less daily



Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™:

1. Read "Be More Active the NEAT Way."
2. Create a plan to move more & sit less daily.
3. Track your progress in case your organization requires documentation.

When National Geographic investigative journalist Dan Buettner set out to discover why certain people live longer than anyone else on earth, he traveled to five countries: Japan, Italy, Costa Rica, Greece, and the United States.

What he found surprised a lot of people. The people who live the longest don't lift weights, run marathons, or join gyms.

- They just never stop moving.
- They grow gardens.
- They walk to the market.
- They do their own housework.
- By one estimate, they engage in some form of physical activity every 10 to 15 minutes.

Buettner called these places Blue Zones, and



Blue Zones research found that the healthiest people move every 10 to 15 minutes.



his research inspired the Netflix documentary *Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones*.

Scientists have a name for this kind of everyday movement. **It's called Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis, or NEAT.**

It's the energy you burn doing anything that isn't sleeping, eating, or working out. Like walking to your car, taking the stairs, or even fidgeting.

Ready to move more, sit less and improve your health without going to the gym? **Take the month-long health challenge:** Be More Active the NEAT Way.

NEAT ►



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7 Health Benefits of Everyday Movement

Discover what NEAT can do for your health

If the gym isn't your thing, or your schedule really is packed, NEAT may be the most practical approach to better health you haven't tried yet.

Research shows that increasing everyday movement, without any structured exercise, can make a real difference. Here's what NEAT activity can do for your health:

✓ 1. Burn more calories

NEAT can account for a significant portion of your total daily calorie burn.

In fact, differences in everyday movement can account for up to 2,000 calories per day between people of similar size, mostly due to differences in lifestyle and occupation.¹

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How NEAT is Your Day?

Can small movements really improve your health, even without structured workouts? Take the quiz to find out.



T | F

- ☐ ☐ The average adult spends more than half of their waking hours sitting.
- ☐ ☐ Everyday activities like walking, cleaning, and taking the stairs count toward your daily calorie burn.
- ☐ ☐ You need at least 30 minutes of continuous exercise to get any health benefits from movement.
- ☐ ☐ People who sit for long periods have a higher risk of heart disease, diabetes, and early death, even if they exercise.
- ☐ ☐ Small increases in daily movement, without any structured exercise, can improve your health.

Check Your Answers

How did you do? Most adults spend the majority of their waking hours sitting, whether at a desk, in the car, or on the couch.

Research shows that prolonged sitting raises the risk of:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- And early death...
- Even for people who exercise regularly



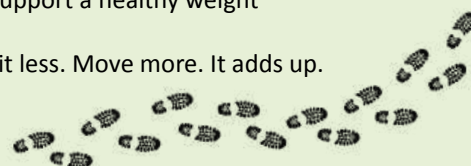
The good news? You don't need a gym or a workout plan to make a difference.

Everyday activities like walking, cleaning, and taking the stairs all count.

Small increases in daily movement can help:

- Control blood sugar
- Lower blood pressure
- Improve cholesterol
- Support a healthy weight

Sit less. Move more. It adds up.



Answers: 1. True, 2. True, 3. True, 4. False, 5. True

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✓ 2. Control blood sugar

Breaking up long periods of sitting with short bursts of movement helps regulate blood glucose levels and can lower the risk of type 2 diabetes.²



✓ 3. Lower blood pressure



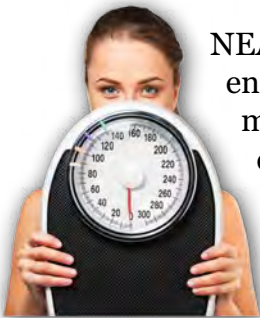
Regular low-intensity movement throughout the day has been shown to help reduce blood pressure over time.

✓ 4. Improve cholesterol

More daily movement is associated with higher HDL (good) cholesterol and lower LDL (bad) cholesterol levels.



✓ 5. Support a healthy weight



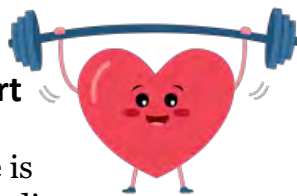
NEAT helps maintain a negative energy balance, making it easier to manage weight without formal exercise.

Here's a NEAT way to level up your daily movement to support weight management: Track your steps. Aim for 10,000+ steps a day.

✓ 6. Strengthen your heart

Sitting less and moving more is linked to a lower risk of heart disease and cardiovascular events.³

One recent study found that people who clocked at least 7,000 steps a day had a 25% lower risk of heart disease.⁴



Here's NEAT way to be more active: Take the stairs. Skip the elevator whenever you can. Even one or two flights adds up over the course of a week.

✓ 7. Boost your mood

Even light movement throughout the day can lift your mood, reduce stress, and improve mental clarity.

The best part? You don't have to carve out extra time.

Just move more doing everyday activities.

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15 NEAT Ways to Be More Active



Simple ways to move more throughout the day at home, at work & on the go

Wondering how to be more active even if you don't have time for a typical workout?

Here are simple ways to add more NEAT movement to your day, wherever you are.

5. Move during screen time.

Do a few stretches, squats, or jumping jacks during commercial breaks or between episodes. Even light movement counts.



1. Take the long way. When you're moving around the house, add a few extra steps. Walk to the far bathroom. Take the stairs twice. Loop through the kitchen before sitting down.

2. Stand while you talk. Next time you're on the phone, stand up and pace. It feels natural, and the steps add up fast.

3. Clean like company's coming. Vacuuming, mopping, scrubbing, and organizing are all NEAT activities. Put some energy into it and you'll burn more calories than you think.

4. Walk the dog. A 20-minute walk with a pet is good for both of you. No dog? Walk to a neighbor's house instead of texting. Or offer to walk your neighbor's dog.



6. Stand up every hour.

Prolonged sitting is hard on your body. Set a reminder to stand, stretch, or take a short walk every 60 minutes.

7. Take the stairs. Skip the elevator whenever you can. Even one or two flights adds up over the course of a week.

8. Walk to chat. Instead of sending an email or a chat message, walk over and deliver it in person.



9. Try a walking meeting. If the agenda doesn't require a screen, take the meeting outside or walk the hallway. You'll often think more clearly too.

10. Pace when you think. Got a problem to work through? Get up and walk while you do it. Movement and mental clarity go hand in hand.

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11. Park farther away. It's the easiest NEAT upgrade there is. Park at the far end of the lot and walk in.

12. Take the stairs, not the escalator. Airports, malls, parking garages. The stairs are almost always right there.

13. Walk while you wait. Waiting for a ride, a table, or an appointment? Walk around instead of standing still or scrolling your phone.

14. Carry your groceries. When you can, skip the cart and carry your bags. It's a short burst of resistance activity most people overlook.

15. Go inside. Skip the drive-through and walk in. It's a small choice that adds a few more steps to your day.



Move More, Feel Better

The people Dan Buettner studied in the Blue Zones didn't have a workout plan. They just never stopped moving. A little here, a little there, all day long. That's all NEAT is. And it turns out, that's enough.

Pick one or two things from this list and start today. Take the stairs. Go for a walk after lunch and dinner. Stand up while you're on the phone. Small moves. Every day. That's the NEAT way to better health.



More NEAT Ways to Be Active

How harmful is too much sitting?

<https://tinyurl.com/y2tz6xwm>

A NEAT way to lose weight

<https://tinyurl.com/2fxd2fa5>

How to keep NEAT simple

<https://tinyurl.com/zjp7y2d9>



References

1. von Loeffelholz, C., et al. (2022). Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis in Human Energy Homeostasis. *Endotext*. From: <https://tinyurl.com/mdpe66ww>
2. Rizzato, A., et al. (2022). Non-exercise activity thermogenesis in the workplace: The office is on fire. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 10: 1024856. From: <https://tinyurl.com/9e4ie8zp>
3. Gao, W., et al. (2024). Occupational sitting time, leisure physical activity, and all-cause and cardiovascular disease mortality. *JAMA Network Open*, 7(1): e2350680. From: <https://tinyurl.com/kd7n6ebn>
4. Ding, D., et al. (2025). Daily steps and health outcomes in adults: a systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis. *Open Access*, 10(8): E668-E681. From: <https://tinyurl.com/56ramfhr>

Be More Active the NEAT Way

Move more, sit less daily

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, or add to your digital calendar).
2. Practice increasing NEAT activities throughout the day.
3. Use the calendar to record your actions and choices to move more and sit less.
4. Review your progress at the end of each day, week, and at the end of the month. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	NOTES
HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	
ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	
HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	
ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	
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HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	HC 	
ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	ex. min. ____	

_____ Number of days this month I did NEAT activities.

_____ Number of days this month I exercised 30 minutes.

Other wellness projects completed this month:

NAME _____ **DATE** _____