



SIT-STAND ADJUSTABLE WORKSTATION FACT SHEET



SIT OR STAND? THAT IS THE QUESTION

With more recent evidence showing the adverse health effects of prolonged sitting time in the workplace, some workplaces are choosing to implement adjustable workstations as a method to reduce their workers' sedentary behaviour.

There is a growing body of evidence that high levels of sedentary behaviour and sitting in particular are emerging risk factors for chronic disease. Given this, the Heart Foundation recommends that adults aim to reduce the total amount of time they sit during the day and avoid prolonged periods of sitting.

Sit-stand workstations adjust in height so that they can be used from either a sitting or standing position.

Ergonomists suggest that switching between sitting and standing can improve comfort levels and increase productivity.



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SIT STAND WORKSTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Having a sit stand workstation is only one of the ways in which to reduce sedentary behaviour and should not be considered as a “fix all” solution to the problem. Other factors such as lifestyle choices and increasing levels of physical activity in general will also play a role in overall health and wellbeing.

It is important to note that sit-stand workstations are not meant to replace sitting altogether. They are a way to alternate between sitting and standing throughout the day.

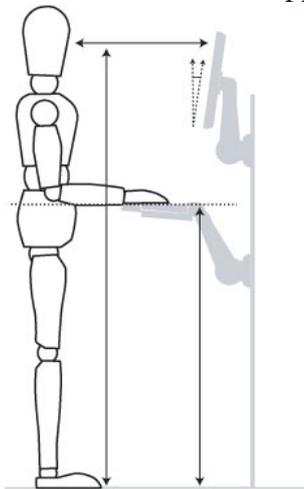
In addition they may not be suitable for people who have existing medical conditions for example people with knee, hip, ankle or lower back injuries or those that suffer from arthritic conditions. As standing for prolonged periods may aggravate these conditions.

The cost and any modifications to the existing work area also need to be taken into account. Before you purchase a sit-stand height-adjustable workstation, consider the following:

- overall stability of the desk
- storage requirements – inbuilt drawers under the workstation can limit accessibility
- the workers’ capacity to easily and safely use
- workstation adjustment controls
- portability – whether wheels are required for the workstation to be moved
- whether additional features are required to hold cables, monitors or printers
- whether an inbuilt or portable footrest is required.
- the load capacity of desk.
- always check the dimensions prior to purchase to ensure it will fit.. For all sit-stand options people who have overhead shelving may find that it interferes when it is in standing position, check this in advance.
- whether anti-fatigue mat is required

POSTURE WHILE STANDING

It is also important that employees know about correct posture when standing at workstations. Important factors include alignment of the legs, torso, neck and head, as well as the use of appropriate and supportive footwear.



When you move between sitting and standing options you should aim for the same monitor and keyboard set-up as sitting, that is have your elbows at a 90 angle with the keyboard, monitor about outstretched arms distance away and eyes level with the top of the monitor

WAYS TO SIT LESS AT WORK



Take the stairs



Go for a walk



Stand during meetings



Take stretch breaks



Take regular breaks



Have walking meetings



Eat lunch away from the office



Go and talk instead of sending emails



WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR A SIT-STAND WORKSTATION

There is no established UOW policy for an individual to be deemed eligible to require an adjustable desk.

There are two qualifying factors that contribute to the recommendation of an adjustable desk being pursued. This includes:

- a) an assessment by UOW's WHS staff where the outcome demonstrates an adjustable height desk would assist the individual's work environment. Medical information may need to be provided to assist in this process and
- b) a home entity (Faculty, School, Division, Unit) willing to fund the procurement of an adjustable height desk for the individual

OTHER OPTIONS

Instead of having a sit-stand desk for everyone, a hot desk could be set-up where staff could take turns at standing throughout the day.

If you are suffering from a long term disability, you may be eligible for funding for equipment such as an adjustable desk, through a Government program called Job Access. Workplace Health & Safety Unit can apply on your behalf if you meet their eligibility criteria. Contact WHS for an information sheet to see if you would be eligible.

OTHER WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR OVERALL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



Park further away from your office



Participate in an exercise class at lunch



Walk or ride to work



Walk part of the way to work. If catching a bus get off one or 2 stops before.



Play with your family



Participate in a team or individual sporting activity



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