

Is Your Job Making You Fat?

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A fatter paycheck is something every employee loves. For some workers, however, their bank accounts aren't the only things expanding.

Forty-seven percent of workers say they have gained weight since starting their present jobs, according to CareerBuilder.com's "Work and Health 2005" survey. It comes as no surprise – with today's tight schedules come tighter waistbands. Who has time to cook healthy meals and exercise regularly?

And employers aren't offering much support in this area. Seventy-three percent of workers say their employers don't offer workout facilities, gym passes or weight loss programs to help their employees slim down.

Are unwanted pounds weighing you down? Here are some simple and easy tips for you to fight the bulge while on the job:

- Resurrect your lunch box. Thirty-nine percent of workers say they eat out during the workday at least three times a week instead of packing a lunch, and one-in-ten workers say they eat out five times a week. By skipping the deli counter in favor of brown bags, you control your portions, cut calories and save money.
- Hang up the phone. Thanks to technology like e-mail and voice mail, it's easy to stay glued to your chair all day. When you need to talk to a co-worker across the office, don't just reach for the phone. Walk over there and chat face-to-face. Those extra steps add up.
- Blacklist the vending machines. Thirty-five percent of workers say they snack at the office at least twice a day, and 43 percent of workers say they eat more unhealthy snacks at work than at home. Pack healthier snacks like yogurt and veggies in your work bag each day. That way, when the afternoon hunger hits, you won't beeline to the vending machines.
- Keep a bottle of water at your desk. Many workers reach for food when they're bored or stressed. If you keep a bottle of water next to you and sip it continuously throughout the day, you'll feel fuller and be less tempted to chow down.
- Use your lunch hour. If you have a fitness center in or near your office, your lunch hour is a prime time to squeeze in a workout. Or, grab a bite at your desk, then go out for a walk around the neighborhood. Not only is this healthier for you, it also improves your productivity.
- Help work help you. You're not the only one in this predicament. Seek the support of your co-workers. Form an at-work Weight Watchers group. Request skinny treats in lieu of sugary ones in the vending machines. Have a healthy pot luck once a week. Ask your human resources department to explore discounts at nearby health clubs.