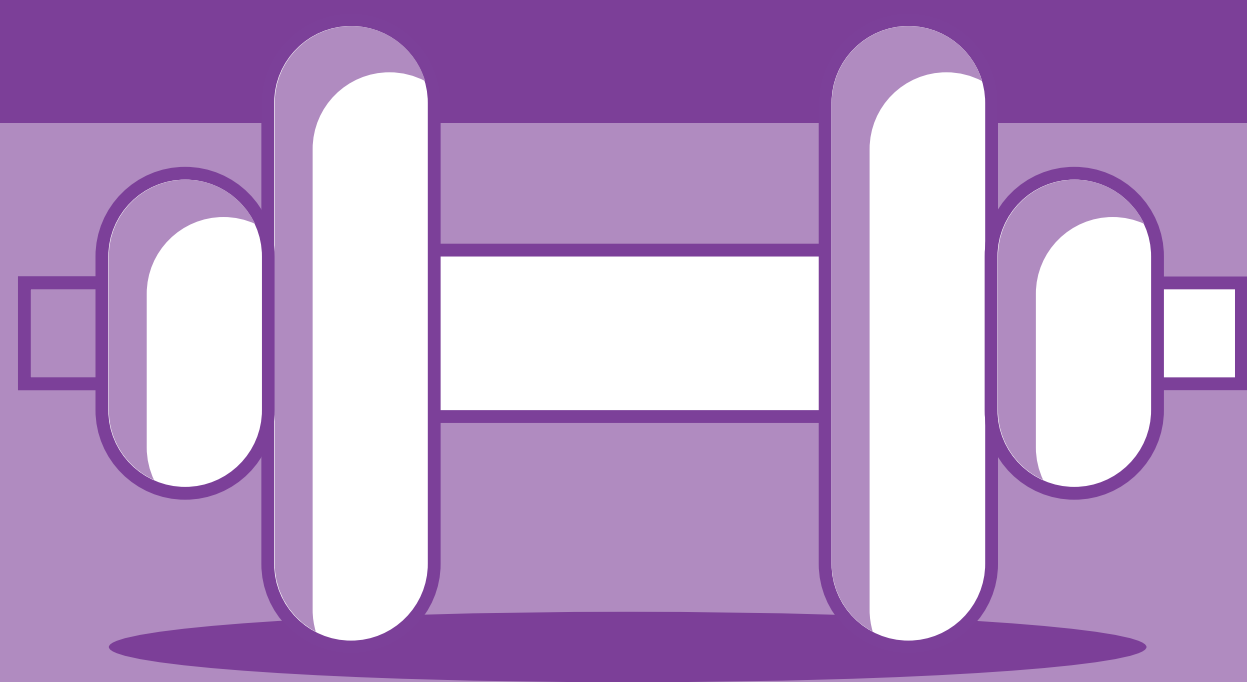


# The mental health benefits of working out at work

Investing in your employees' fitness and well-being pays off



#LetsTalk

When workers are given the freedom and flexibility to invest in their fitness, organisations reap the benefits of a happier, healthier, more engaged and productive workforce. Research shows that on days when employees are physically active, 72 percent reported improvements in time management, 79 percent said their mental and interpersonal performance was better and 74 percent said they managed their workloads better. Significant numbers to be sure.

## Low and no-cost ways to encourage wellness in your workplace

Recognising that workplace wellness programmes benefit the employee and the enterprise alike, most major employers offer some form of employee wellness benefit. In the U.S., according to a 2012 survey by the RAND Corporation, 69 percent of employers with more than 50 employees offered a wellness programme, and 75 percent of programmes included incentives to encourage participation.

But even small employers can do something. Here are some ways to initiate a health and wellness culture at your business:

1

### Loud and clear

Make sure your employees know they have your permission to exercise during the day. Encourage them to walk, swim or jog during their lunch break, get up and move around at regular intervals and stretch often. And lead by example with buy-in from the top of the organisation.

2

### Get up, stand up

Cardboard standing desks are inexpensive. They sit on top of any normal 'sitting desk' and help workers avoid the health risks associated with sitting for long periods of time. Encourage workers to regularly switch from sitting to standing positions throughout the day.

3

### Walk it out

Start a fitness club or a step counter/activity tracker competition. Friendly competition can spark a spirited atmosphere, inspire loyalty and motivate your employees to be more physically active in their lives. You can even suggest walking meetings.

4

### Get involved

Commit to participating in a local walk, run, or even an environment clean-up drive as an organisation. Not only will these activities encourage fitness, they'll also create a great sense of mental well-being and community amongst your employees.

5

### Talk about it

Promote a positive attitude around physical and mental health. Many people struggle with anxiety, stress or depression. Letting them know it's okay to talk about it and seek help will foster a healthy approach to physical and mental health in the workplace.

## Help for healthier living

Whether you're an individual looking to improve your health and wellness with self-care resources, or an organisation taking steps to help build a more resilient workforce, there are programmes and resources that can help.

For more information check out [Mental health support resources](#) and [Aetna International's stress-reduction services](#)

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#MentalHealth

#MentalHealthAwareness

#EndTheStigma

Sources:

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