



## Physical Activity Breaks at Meetings

Active breaks at meetings are great opportunities to help participants re-energize. Especially in meetings of an hour or longer, active breaks help participants feel more alert and can help focus on the task at hand and improve productivity.

### Planning the Meeting:

- ▶ In routine weekly or monthly meetings, make stretch and activity breaks a habit. Rotate the responsibility for leading the activity.
- ▶ If the meeting is between 2 or 3 people, consider a walking meeting.
- ▶ In larger meetings, include physical activity on the meeting agenda so people can plan for it (e.g., bringing walking shoes, wear casual clothing).
- ▶ Choose a location where people can safely and easily take a walk. Provide maps if the area is unfamiliar.
- ▶ Encourage networking during breaks by suggesting groups take a walk together and talk about their common goals.

### Before the Activity – tell participants that the activity break is:

- ▶ Completely voluntary. Do only what feels good. Stop if anything hurts.
- ▶ A chance to move at a comfortable pace. They don't need to sweat.
- ▶ Between 3 and 10 minutes long, to get muscles warm and the heart pumping.
- ▶ An energizer for the rest of the meeting.
- ▶ A reason to smile.

### Physical Activity Ideas for Meeting Breaks:

- ▶ Slowly stretch neck, shoulders, arms, hands, back, legs and feet – avoid bouncing and jerky movements. Move arms, head and torso in circles.
- ▶ March in place or lead a brisk walk around the room; consider using the stairs or going outside.
- ▶ Suggest that if participants want a more vigorous workout, they can lift their knees higher or pump their arms.



You don't need an aerobics instructor to lead a physical activity break at a meeting—just be safe and have fun. People can stretch or be more active, depending on the circumstances. You can choose whether to take your activity break indoors or outdoors. Make sure there's enough space and clearance for everyone to avoid injury. You might want to play some lively music, too.