



Office Workers and DVT Dangers

Most people know that air travelers should walk around during long flights to avoid the chance of blood clots in the leg, also known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT). Now a New Zealand study suggests the risk is even greater for some office workers.

Professor Richard Beasley of the Medical Research Institute of New Zealand found that a third of 62 patients admitted to the hospital with DVT were office workers who spent long periods of time in front of their computers.

Beasley said only 21 percent of patients who had recently traveled on long flights suffered from DVT. Such clots can travel to the heart, lungs, or brain and can result in chest pain, breathing problems, or even death from a heart attack or stroke.

Beasley commented: "People who work in offices are not actually getting up and walking around like they used to. I think it is causing people physical trouble because they are not taking exercise, but also psychological trouble because they are not interacting with their colleagues, or team-building in a face-to-face way."

2006 Dates:

January:

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February:

Child Passenger Safety Week

March:

Poison Prevention Week
Workplace Eye Safety Month
Save Your Vision Month

April:

Sports Eye Safety Month
Intl Building Safety Week
Work Zone Aware. Week
Playground Safety Week

May:

Clean Air Month
Melanoma Awareness Month
Electrical Safety Month
National EMS Week
Poison Prevention Week

June:

National Safety Month

July:

EYE INJURY PREV. MONTH

August:

Prepare Your Winter Safety Training!

September:

Farm Safety /Health Week

October:

Nat. Fire Prevention Week
Drive Safely Work Week
Radon Action Week

November:

Take advantage of the weather and do your classroom training!

December:

"3D Month" - National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month

Aging Workforce - Muscles Become "Hard of Hearing" As You Age!

But there's good news!

As people age, neurons have to yell louder at the body's muscles to whip them into action, according to a new study. Researchers examined the relationship between neuron activity and corresponding muscle force for 23 subjects between the ages of 18 and 88. They found a diminished ability of the muscles to respond to the commands of neurons amongst the older participants. And this slow muscle response can increase one's risk of becoming injured.

Specifically, the researchers looked at the dorsal interosseous muscle, situated between the index finger and thumb. This muscle is activated by 120 individual neurons. Each subject had a small needle-like electrode inserted into their index finger. The electrode was hooked up to a computer which recorded the electrical impulses as they traveled from the neurons to the muscle fibers. The participants were asked to use that finger to follow the outline of a wavy line with peaks and valleys on a computer screen.

"More force — which this indicated by a corresponding higher firing rate of neurons — is exerted just before you begin the upturn toward one peak and then it eases off again in the downturn toward a valley," said Christopher Knight, a researcher from the University of Delaware. The tests showed neuron firing rates and muscle responsiveness were lower in older participants than the younger subjects.

"The repeated contraction of muscles is essential to movements such as walking," Knight said. "However, our muscles have a reduced capacity to contract or 'twitch' as we grow older. We lose fast-twitch muscle fibers as we age."

This type of reduced neuron activity, Knight said, could be improved however with exercising. "After power training with weights, we see an increase in firing rates," Knight said. "For safety, we're commonly advised to do things slowly when exercising, but it's important to also do some fast exercises. You need a fast movement to prevent a fall. Even in the frail elderly, it is possible to use exercise bands for manual resistance to improve the speed of movement."

The study was detailed in the *Journal of Applied Physiology*.



Posture, Strength and Back Safety!

Have you caught your reflection in the mirror lately? If you are like most people, the shoulders are rounded forward, the upper back is hunched and the belly is protruding. It's not a pretty picture. Well it doesn't have to be that way! You can improve your back's strength and posture with some simple exercises at home or the office.

Here are three spine-straightening activities to try:

1. Stand against a wall and press your shoulder blades back. Let your lower back keep its natural curve, and keep your chest lifted and your chin parallel to the floor. Hold this position and breathe in and out 10 times.
2. Sit in a sturdy chair with your back straight and your abdominal muscles pulled in, extend the arms straight forward at shoulder-level. Exhale and round the shoulders and back. Pull the chin in towards the chest, contract the abdominal muscles and hold until all the air is blown out. Inhale as you return to the upright position. Repeat 10 times.
3. Lie on the floor face down, with your arms extended above your head. Exhale and lift both legs and arms into the air, hold for a few seconds and return to the floor. Repeat 5 times.

These exercises all work on strengthening the back, both upper and lower, as well as the abdominal muscles. Do these exercises every other day and soon you'll be walking as if you are carrying a textbook on your head!

Tight Neckties Can Lead To Glaucoma

Men should think twice about how tight they wear a necktie because it could increase their chances of developing glaucoma, a group of serious eye diseases. Researchers reported in the British Journal of Ophthalmology showed that a tight necktie raises blood pressure in the eye, which is a leading risk factor in the illness that can lead to damage to the optic nerve and loss of vision. "A tight necktie increases IOP (intraocular pressure) in both normal subjects and glaucoma patients and could affect the diagnosis and management of glaucoma," said Dr. Robert Ritch of the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary.

Ritch and his colleagues tested the IOP of 20 healthy men and 20 who suffered from glaucoma while they were wearing an open-neck shirt, before putting on a tight necktie and three minutes after loosening it. Their results showed that 60 percent of the men with glaucoma and 70 percent of the healthy volunteers had an increased eye pressure after wearing a tight necktie. In addition to raising the risk of glaucoma, donning a tight necktie during an eye examination could lead to a false diagnosis of the illness.

The researchers suspect that a tight necktie constricts the jugular vein, which increases blood pressure and IOP. The risk of glaucoma, which affects about 3 million people in the United States alone, increases with age.

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Safety Resource Center

Did You Know:

There is an entire page on the Cambridge Risk Control Website that contains web links to valuable safety resources.

It's located at:

www.cambridgeriskcontrol.com/safety/links.htm

Jody, is it true?

"Our supervisor won't let us wear shorts when we landscape - he says that it's safer to wear long pants. Considering the heat, is that really true" Mikaela E., NY

It's true. Long pants protect you from the leg injuries that you and other landscapers have every year - cuts, scrapes, bug bites, bee stings and sunburn. The safety added by the increased material of the pants, outweighs the comfort of shorts.

Safety Information:

The Cambridge Risk Control website remains a great resource for your safety information needs.

This newsletter, safety handouts, safety videos as well as many other resources can be found at:

www.CambridgeRiskControl.com

Have you tried it ?