ACTIVE MEETINGS GUIDE

FOR USE AT VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON WORKPLACES

Get Active! It Works!

Questions? Email us at healthyemory@emory.edu
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Why Have Active Meetings? .................................................... 3  
Tips for Holding Active Meetings ........................................ 4  
Activity Options ............................................................................................................ 5  
  Active Announcements .................................................................................. 6  
  Games ........................................................................................................ 7  
  Strengthening & Stretching ........................................................................ 8-9  
Other Activities ................................................................................................. 10  
Walking Meetings ............................................................................................ 11  
More Ideas ........................................................................................................ 12  
Take the Pledge ............................................................................................... 13
WHY HAVE ACTIVE MEETINGS?

Physical activity is a key part of health and wellbeing. The Department of Health & Human Services' Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans encourage everyone to reduce sedentary time and move more throughout the day. Increased physical activity and movement can enhance our mood, help us better manage stress, and improve our engagement and productivity.

At work, it can be difficult to find ways to be active. Many Emory employees spend the majority of their workday sitting.

Hosting active meetings means incorporating simple activities into your day - in everything from team huddles, to weekly check-ins, to larger conferences. Active meetings can also be done virtually.

Active Meetings are one way you can make the Active Choice. For other ideas and to take the Active Works pledge, visit the Healthy Emory website.
TIPS FOR HOLDING ACTIVE MEETINGS

Plan for what types of activity you want to do ahead of time.

Let attendees know in advance if they need anything (such as comfortable walking shoes).

Ask for feedback and suggestions from attendees - did they like the activity you chose? Do they have any ideas for how make activity a regular part of the workday?

Be consistent!

- Make one of your weekly meetings a walking meeting.
- Do stretches in every shift change.
- Schedule a break in your meeting agendas to stand up, stretch, and/or walk around.

Routine lets everyone know what to expect, and it helps change the culture of sitting.
ACTIVITY OPTIONS

Choose an activity based on the length and format of your meeting

Time: For shorter meetings, a smaller activity is appropriate, but if the meeting is 60 minutes or more, you may want to add a longer active break.

Location: Is it a virtual meeting, in a conference room, at a clinic station? Think about the size of the space you'll be meeting in, and even consider the weather - maybe you can take the meeting outside to walk while you talk.

Many activities can be modified to be done either in-person or virtual - get creative! With in-person activities, make sure to follow COVID-19 safety guidelines, including wearing masks and keeping distance.
ACTIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Do two things at once to be efficient and active! When making announcements during a meeting, shift change, or team huddle, the audience can do stretches and other activities. Demonstrate the activities yourself and allow participants to choose which ones they'd like to do, or have an assistant lead, switching activities every 15–30 seconds.

Example activities include:
• Walk in place.
• Reach both arms up and down.
• Alternately lean side-to-side with one arm overhead and other hand on your hip.
• Step side-to-side.
• Press arms forward, then elbows back.
• Roll shoulders forward (or circle elbows forward if people have room).
• Roll shoulders backward (or circle elbows backward if people have room).
• Alternately lift left and right knees up and down.
• Gently roll head in a half circle left and right.
• Roll up on toes and back on heels.
GAMES

All games and activities can be done either in-person or virtually. For virtual meetings, invite participants to turn on their video cameras when possible. Modify instructions to best fit your workplace and meeting format.

1. SIMON SAYS

Choose one person to be Simon and call out different movements. The players must only do movements that begin with the words “Simon Says”. If Simon says, “Simon says touch your nose,” then players must touch their nose. If Simon only says, "touch your nose," players must not do the movement. Play until there is a winner or for a set amount of time.

2. CATCH

Have everyone stand and toss a ball around the room. This can also be a great way to learn more about your coworkers - have people say their favorite sport, or a place they'd like to visit, or other fun fact when they catch the ball.

Virtual: Rather than passing a ball around, have participants call the name of the next person to speak.

3. TOUCH BLUE

Start by calling out an attribute to touch (“touch blue," "touch something soft," “touch something cold”). Everyone then has to move to find and touch something with that characteristic. The last person to touch an object then has to select the next attribute. This game works well in virtual meetings too!

4. MOVIE BALL

Everyone sits or stands in a circle. The participant with the ball will start by saying the name of a movie, before bouncing or passing the ball to the next person.

There is a five second limit after the ball is exchanged to name your movie.

The ball continues to be passed to individuals in the group. A person is out of the game if they repeat a movie name or fail to name a movie within the five second time limit. Eventually there is a competition between two people for the winner.

(See image to the right).

Virtual: Rather than passing a ball around, have participants call the name of the next person to speak.
STRENGTHENING & STRETCHING

Be sure to explain and demonstrate how to do each activity to avoid injury.

1. ARM CURLS

Start with arms beside the hips and palms facing forward. Make a fist with your hands then slowly bend at the elbow to raise them toward the shoulders while squeezing and flexing the biceps. Consider adding hand weights, such as a water bottle. For more arm and shoulder stretches, try this video from Blomeyer Health Fitness Center.

2. STANDING HAMSTRING CURLS

Stand in front of your desk and lightly hold onto the edge for support. Shift your weight onto your left leg, bend your right knee and bring your heel to your glutes (butt). Lower the foot. Repeat 10 times and switch legs.

3. SIDE LUNGES

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and toes pointing forward. Take a wide step out to the right as you press your hips back while keeping the left leg straight and both soles of the feet on the ground. Push yourself back to the starting position and lunge to the left.

4. ONE LEG BALANCE

From a standing position, slowly lift one foot off the ground shifting your body weight to one foot. Hold position as long as you are comfortable and repeat with opposite side. If needed, use the back of a chair or edge of a desk for balance.

5. SIDE STEPS

From a standing position, use 1 foot to step to the side while the other remains stationary, return to original position, and repeat with opposite foot. For added difficulty, when stepping out to the side slowly extend your hips backward while bending your knees until you have reached a comfortable squat position. Return to the original position and switch sides.

6. DESK/TABLE PUSHUPS

Place both hands firmly on the edge of desk, shoulder width apart. Walk your feet back slightly until the body is in a straight line. Slowly bend at the elbow and lower your body towards the desk, then push back once your elbows reach 90 degrees. Repeat.
STRENGTHENING & STRETCHING

7. CALF RAISES

Raise heels off the ground. Hold the position briefly, and then slowly lower your heels back to the ground. Hold on to something if you need extra support for balance.

8. UPPER BODY STRETCH

Sit tall in your chair or stand up. Stretch your arms overhead and lace your fingers together, turn the palms to the ceiling. Breathe out and stretch to the right. Take a deep breath in and come up to the center. Breathe out and stretch to the left. Place your arms back at your side. Take a deep breath in and lift your shoulders up to your ears. Breathe out and let shoulders drop. (See image to the right).

9. LOWER BODY STRETCH

Sit up tall in your chair at the edge of the seat. Stretch both legs straight out in front of you. Bend at the waist and slowly reach both hands toward your toes. Breath deeply and stretch further as your body gets more comfortable adjusting to the stretch. Hold for 20-30 seconds. After returning to upright position, point and flex toes 3-5 times. (See image to the right).

10. HEAD STRETCHES

Sit tall in your chair and slowly turn your head to the left. Hold for 5 to 10 seconds. Turn your head to the right and repeat.

11. CHAIR STRETCHES

Blomeyer Health Fitness Center's Youtube Channel has short Active Works videos. Try this set of chair stretches for hamstrings, shoulders, back, and more.
OTHER ACTIVITIES

1. STAND UP AND SWITCH SEATS
   Stand up, and switch 1 or more seats to the right or left and resume meeting. To add more activity, take a lap around the room then sit to resume meeting.
   Virtual: Invite participants to stand up and walk around their room, then return to their seats.

2. MARCH IN PLACE
   Have participants stand at their chairs and march or walk in place

3. TAKE THE STAIRS
   Set a timer and have participants walk up and down the stairs in your building. It's not a race - encourage people to chat and catch up while they climb!
   Virtual: Invite participants to walk up and down stairs in their homes or take laps around their workspace.

4. DANCE PARTY
   Choose a song and have everyone freestyle, or pick a few simple moves to teach attendees.

5. BREATHING EXERCISE
   Sitting comfortably with feet flat on the floor, close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose. Slowly exhale through the mouth. Repeat 3-5 times.

6. MINDFULNESS EXERCISE
   Have participants sit comfortably and close their eyes if they'd like and read a script for a mindfulness exercise or play a video meditation. Some examples are linked below, and many videos can be found on YouTube:
   Pocket Mindfulness Exercises
   Headspace Meditation Exercises
   Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script
WALKING MEETINGS

Walking meetings are a great way to get active!

How to have a walking meeting:

- Choose a route to walk ahead of time
- Notify all attendees to bring comfortable clothing and shoes.
- Set an agenda for the meeting and refer to it while you walk. Designate someone to take notes on a phone or notepad, or use a phone to record the conversation, so the meeting is still productive
- For virtual meetings, talk via phone while you each walk a route of your choice

Walking meetings work best with small groups or one-on-one discussions. For larger meetings try one of these suggestions instead:

- Reserve a room across campus or on a different floor to hold the meeting. Meet up with all attendees at the start of the meeting and walk over to the meeting location together.
- Set aside time for a small group walking discussion. Designate “walking buddies” so that no one is walking alone and encourage conversation about a meeting-related topic.
- For online or large in-person meetings, encourage participants to stand or walk in place during the meeting.
MORE IDEAS

Having food at your meeting?
- Use napkins or small plates to encourage smaller portion sizes
- Serve low-sugar, low-salt options
  - Fruits, vegetables,
  - Pita bread or whole-grain crackers with dip or cheese
- Instead of sodas or sugary beverages, consider offering water, coffee, and unsweetened teas

Looking for more stretches and activity options?
- Take 5 Stretching Video
- Take 5 Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- 5 minute yoga video that you can do at your desk
- Blomeyer Health Fitness Center videos
- Invite Blomeyer Health Fitness Center staff to lead your meeting in an Active Break
  Call 404-727-4600 or email blomeyer@emory.edu

Want to find a place to walk for a meeting? Check out these walking routes and parks near Emory campuses

Check out more Active Works tips for individuals and groups here
TAKE THE PLEDGE TO MAKE THE ACTIVE CHOICE IN YOUR WORKDAY

Fill out the pledge online at:
https://healthyemory.wufoo.com/forms/klq6dfd0vp2dr0/

I PLEDGE TO...

- Move more throughout my day by making the active choice vs. the inactive choice, e.g. Taking the stairs vs. the elevator; standing vs. sitting; taking the longer route to the bathroom.

- Promote Active Works in my scheduled meetings, e.g. active breaks, walking meetings.

- Implement Active Works by participating in Emory physical activity programs, e.g. the Move More Challenge, walking groups, Healthy Emory Connect Healthy Habit challenges.

- Implement Active Works by encouraging my team members to increase their movement while at work, e.g. through desk exercises, participation in Emory physical activity programs, utilizing sustainable commute options.

- Implement Active Works by utilizing sustainable transportation options at Emory, e.g. Emory shuttles, walking vs. driving around campus.