

# PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

*July 2015*

**Stop sitting –  
start standing  
at your desk**

**Are you too  
busy for  
time out?**

**How to work  
smarter, not  
harder**

**Health tips you must  
read – if you sit at a  
computer all day**

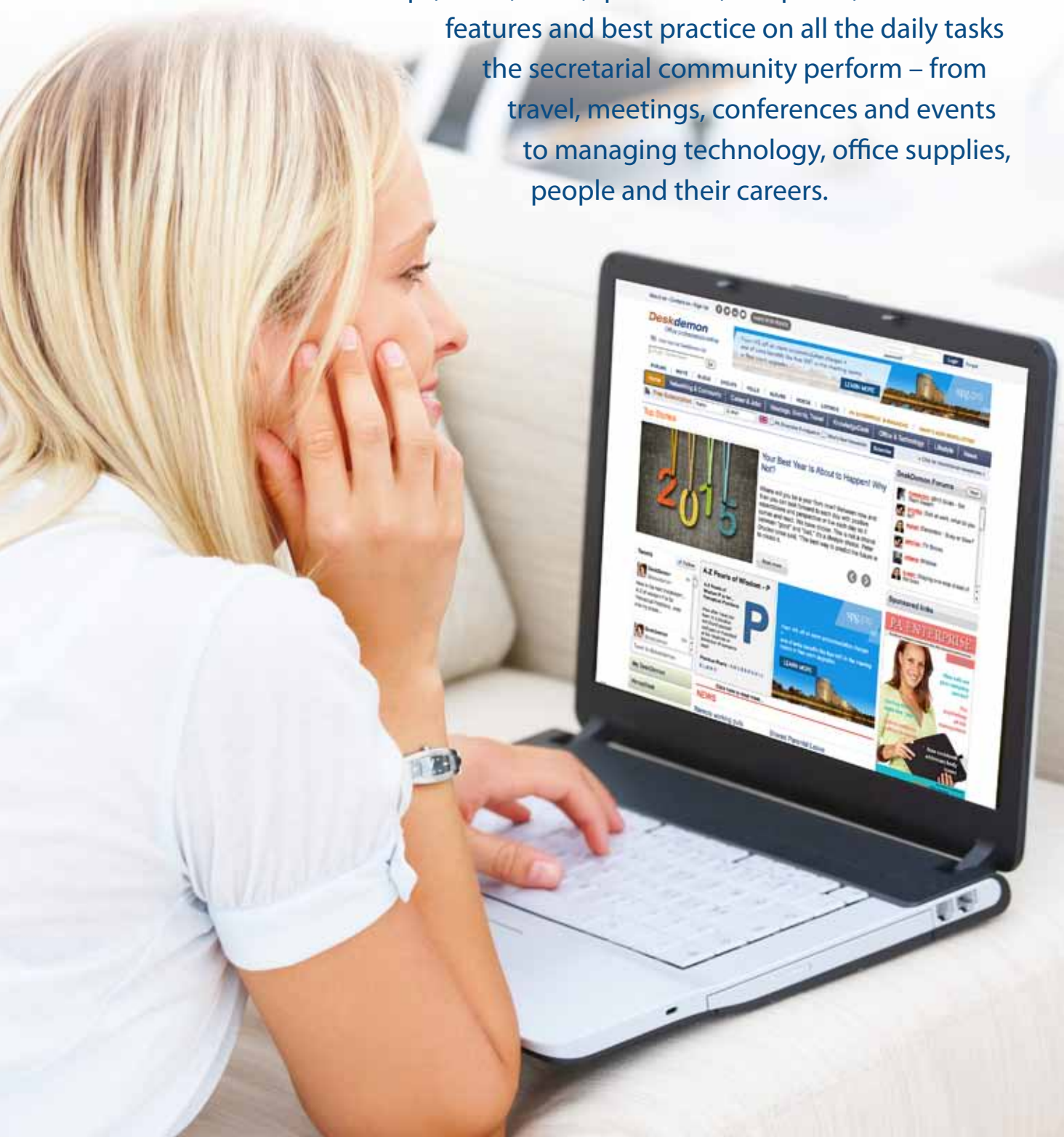
PA Enterprise is published by

**Deskdemon.com**

The World's Largest Website for Executive PAs, Secretaries, Administrators & Office Managers

*As an office worker, where do you go for information, advice, tutorials, vital tools, training and relaxation?*

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## PA ENTERPRISE MAGAZINE

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## 30% of UK office workers more productive when working remotely

Just under a third of UK office workers reported an increase in productivity when working outside of the workplace, according to new research.

The managed services provider, Redcentric, commissioned a YouGov survey of over 2000 UK adults to discover the attitudes of both employers and employees towards home working.

The research found that 54% of UK office workers are currently able to work remotely, with 30% feeling that their productivity increased when they work away from the office and only 17% stating that remote working reduced their efficiency.

In terms of attitudes, an overwhelming 70% of office workers said that it is important for businesses to allow their employees to work remotely, while only 22% believed that this flexibility is unimportant.

However, 48% claimed that their employers didn't allow them to work remotely, with 23% saying that their business simply didn't like them doing it, potentially for reason such as data privacy and loss of productivity. 12% stated that their business' IT systems weren't modern enough to facilitate remote working.

Phil Dyson, Product Group Manager of Voice & Unified Communications from Redcentric,



said working from home can be beneficial to any business.

"Home-working can bring real benefits to almost any organisation. It not only provides flexible working arrangements for employees who need them, it also allows businesses to recruit people from any location."

Today people get the same features and functionality at home as if they were in the office, even extending to call centre staff," Mr Dyson said. "Features like instant messaging, presence, video and online collaboration make location irrelevant, and with modern services working over home broadband, they're really cost-effective too."

# Seek and destroy

## 12,000 job applicants for 'Mobile Phone Destruction Tester'

A UK based mobile phone comparison site looking to fill a position that requires one lucky candidate to test mobile phones to destruction has attracted more than 12,000 applications from across the globe.

TigerMobiles.com said they were overwhelmed by the number of responses in their bid to employ a 'Mobile Phone Destruction Tester'

Applications have poured in from not just Britain, but as far away as United States, Malaysia and India for the £36,500 per year role.

"We expected a couple of hundred people to apply because it's an interesting job but the sheer volume of applications is the last thing we expected when we posted the advert," said Tiger Mobiles head of customer insight Brandon Ackroyd.

"We couldn't have predicted that news of the vacancy would spread overseas and we've received thousands of CV's from across the globe."

Applicants have cited a range of different expertise to prove they were up to the job including one candidate who sent the firm a parcel containing a smashed up phone to showcase his 'particular set of skills'.

Comments in other applications included: "I have a lot of interests that present a plethora of creative ways to destroy tech (Festivals, parkour and alligator wrestling.)"



Another hopeful candidate said that if phones could talk none of the ones that he previously owned would have very many nice things to say about him.

"It's been a real diverse set of individuals who have applied including people currently in full time jobs already looking to smash up phones in their spare time and others simply looking for a change of career." Ackroyd added.

"It's going to be a real struggle to whittle down the thousands of applicants to just one. We've had a lot of very credible candidates wanting the job and after we have conducted some short telephone interviews we are considering an Apprentice style task for the a final 10. That way we can find out for certain who can really put smartphones through their paces for a living."

## Top 10 spam emails

**Tips to lose your belly, pay bills and relieve pain top list of spam emails affecting businesses says Mailprotector**



Tips on how to reduce your belly, cope with big bills and buy low cost ink cartridges are the most popular subject lines for spam emails. This is according to filtering statistics analysed over one week by cloud-based email security, management and hosting specialist, Mailprotector.

According to the company's secure email filtering engines, which scan messages for offensive, harmful or policy violating content, the number one spam subject is the simple one-word 'Hi!' closely followed by 'Hello!'. The rather worrying 'These 4 things happen right before a heart attack' comes in at number three. The list, however, includes a variety of topics from 'Tips to a tiny belly' to 'Why you have joint pain' to lure people into clicking on a link or opening an attachment and potentially infecting their systems with malware.

Small and medium sized businesses could be losing as much as £34,000 a year each from unwanted email, including spam. This figure included time spent by employees opening, reading and deleting spam emails, as well as support costs, but not the downtime and costs related to affected networks and systems.

"I think it surprises us that spam is still such big business and still has such an impact on our daily working – and personal – lives," according to Scott Tyson, Sales Director EMEA, Mailprotector. "Many companies have email filtering or spam solutions that help capture the majority of it, but for those that don't, it's annoying, frustrating and can be downright offensive if the spam is of a sexual or harmful nature."

### Top spam list

1. Hi!
2. Hello!
3. These 4 Things Happen Right Before A Heart Attack
4. How Safe is Your Area? Find Sex Offenders Near You
5. Why You Have Joint Pain
6. Locks in Freshness
7. Big Bills and No Way to pay them?
8. Glasses Sale -- Sign Up For 50% Off Your First Pair!
9. 1 Tip To A Tiny Belly
10. Low Cost Ink Cartridges



# Too busy for time out?



**Office workers are too busy to take time out for health and wellbeing activities that could benefit them now and in later life, finds new research by Age UK and Bupa.**

The survey found that 35% of people whose work is solely or mainly office based, spend just an hour or less on physical exercise per week, with nearly 1 in 10 admitting (9%) they do no exercise at all.

Activities which can have a positive impact on wellbeing, such as reading a book or doing a crossword, are also being squeezed, with nearly half (48%) devoting just an hour or less every week to such activities.

Taking time out to manage stress comes at the biggest price for time-poor office workers, with 52% admitting to spending no time at all on mental wellbeing activities such as practising mindfulness, meditation, or other stress relieving activities.

Despite the toll stress can take on the mind and body now and in the future, just under a third (27%) make an effort to recognise the signs of stress and take action to deal with it. >

## Too busy for time out?

Office workers, however, are trying to find ways to incorporate healthy activities into their daily lifestyle, with 53% opting to take the stairs instead of the lift and 33% making time to visit friends and family part of their daily routine.

### **We want to be healthy in later life**

The good news is that among the general UK population there is an appetite to prepare for a healthy later life, with 65% of people surveyed saying they would like to make changes to their current lifestyle to prepare for a healthy later life.

Of those who are taking action to follow a healthy lifestyle, almost two thirds (64%) are doing so to reduce the risk of any future health conditions. Among the worries people have about growing older, dementia was revealed as the top concern (55%), followed by physical ill health (52%) and loss of mobility (48%).

Laurie Boulton, Head of Fundraising at Age UK, said: 'Research has shown that looking after our mental wellbeing is just as important as protecting our physical health when it comes to ageing.

'While genes have an effect, 75% of the factors that lead to longer life are within our own control, like lifestyle and nutrition. Everyone can take steps to help them age better and it's never too early or too late to start. That's why we're working with Bupa to empower people to lead a healthy life now and support older people to do the same.'

Richard Adams, Chief Nurse at Bupa UK,

comments: 'It's really important that we all take steps to think about how our everyday actions could affect our health when we are older.

The good news is that it's not difficult to make simple changes that can have a positive effect today and help us all live longer, healthier and happier lives in the years to come.

'As well as employees thinking about their health, we would urge employers to create an environment where their workforce can take time to lead healthy, active lifestyles, and lead by example. The risks of not thinking ahead are high – dementia, diabetes are just two examples of diseases that are potential outcomes of unhealthy lifestyles.'

For office workers feeling the squeeze on time to dedicate to their health, there are lots of fun ways for people to get fit, keep active and help improve their physical and mental wellbeing. Age UK and Bupa have reviewed existing academic studies and research to compile 10 tips that can help maintain healthy ageing – benefiting both physiological and cognitive health. These tips can be found at [www.ageuk.org.uk/ageingtips](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/ageingtips).

Age UK has been chosen as Bupa's strategic charity partner in the UK, and all aspects of Bupa UK will be getting involved, from employees to customers and beyond. The healthcare specialist and its more than 32,000 employees will be raising funds and volunteering for Age UK with the aim of raising £1m over the next two years to support thousands of older people across the UK.



# A 'tasteful' way to a beautiful complexion

**New beauty supplement is developed to be eaten on-the-go and help nourish and rejuvenate skin from the inside out.**

Achieving a radiant complexion without all the effort? Yes, please! NEW help: beautify skin supplements from Works with Water Nutraceuticals have arrived to make your beauty regime just that little bit easier. These delicious natural apple flavoured jelly supplements are developed to be eaten on-the-go and help nourish and rejuvenate skin from the inside out.

Available from [www.workswithwater.com](http://www.workswithwater.com) and priced at £22.94 for a 14 day supply, help: beautify skin paves the way for a new generation of supplements that go beyond the traditional pill or capsule format. Now you can enjoy daily skin nourishing benefits wherever you are as help: beautify skin becomes a must-have, yummy addition to your beauty routine. Best of all, on a hot summer's day you can put your jelly treat in the freezer and turn it into a refreshing and cooling treat to maintain radiant summer skin!



**help: beautify skin contains PravenAGE™, a patented blend of Marine Collagen, Resveratrol, CoEnzymeQ10, Aloe Vera and Vitamin C, all natural ingredients that have been proven to deliver tangible anti-ageing skin benefits.**

## Get up on your feet – for 2 hours a day

**Office workers should be on their feet for a minimum of 2 hours daily during working hours, recommends the first ever UK guidance designed to curb the health risks of too much cumulative sitting time, and published online in the British Journal of Sports Medicine.**

This daily quota should eventually be bumped up to 4 hours a day, breaking up prolonged periods of sitting with the use of sit stand desks, standing based work, and regular walkabouts, it says.

The guidance, which evaluates and distils the available evidence, was drawn up by a panel of international experts, at the behest of Public Health England and a UK community interest company (Active Working CIC). It aims to make some core recommendations, amid the growing body of research linking prolonged periods spent seated, as opposed to being generally physically inactive, with a heightened risk of serious illness and premature death, and the burgeoning market of workplace products developed in response to the emerging evidence.

The authors point out that in the UK sedentary behaviour now accounts for 60% of people's waking hours and for 70% of those at high risk of a long term condition.

"For those working in offices, 65 –75% of their working hours are spent sitting, of which

more than 50% of this is accumulated in prolonged periods of sustained sitting," they write. "The evidence is clearly emerging that a first 'behavioural' step could be simply to get people standing and moving more frequently as part of their working day," they say, adding that this is likely to be more achievable than targeted exercise.

Based on the current evidence they recommend:

- **2 hours daily of standing and light activity (light walking) during working hours, eventually progressing to a total of 4 hours for all office workers whose jobs are predominantly desk based**
- **Regularly breaking up seated based work with standing based work, with the use of adjustable sit stand desks/work stations**
- **Avoidance of prolonged static standing, which may be as harmful as prolonged sitting**
- **Altering posture/light walking to alleviate possible musculoskeletal pain and fatigue as part of the adaptive process.**

As well as encouraging staff to embrace other healthy behaviours, such as cutting down on drinking and smoking, eating a nutritious diet, and alleviating stress, employers should also warn their staff about the potential dangers of too much time spent sitting down either at work or at home.

Some companies have already invested time and money creating a more active working environment for their staff, but those that haven't should evaluate how best to achieve the recommendations, they say.

This could include deciding when and how staff take breaks which involve standing and movement; and desk designs and technologies that allow employees to do their job more easily either at their desk or from other locations in the office while standing up, they suggest.

The authors acknowledge that much of the evidence they draw on for their recommendations is based on observational and retrospective studies, which make it difficult to prove direct cause and effect.

Nevertheless, they emphasise: "While longer term intervention studies are required, the level of consistent evidence accumulated to date, and the public health context of rising chronic diseases, suggest initial guidelines are justified."



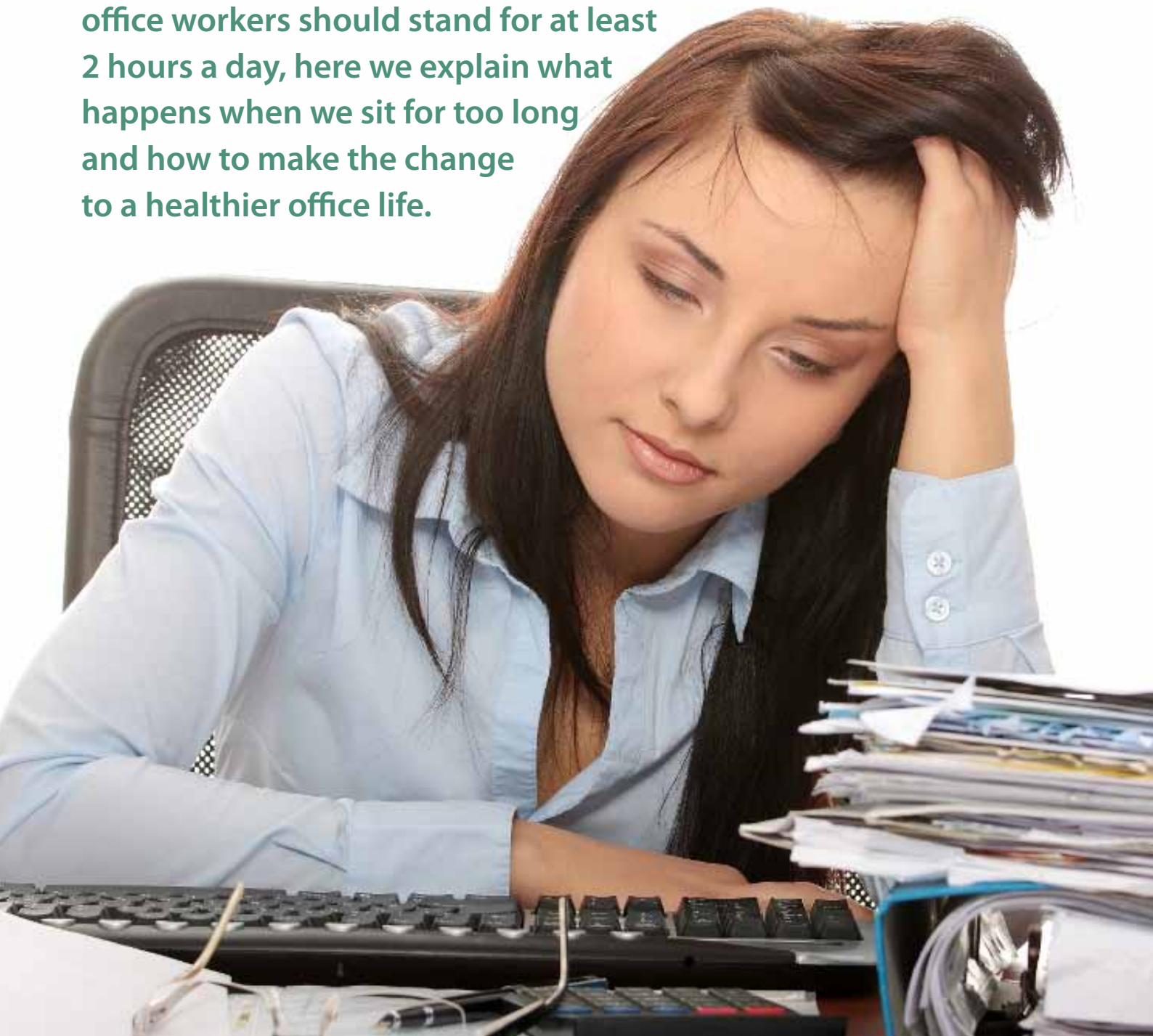
Turn the page for  
tips to help you  
make the change  
to standing while  
working



## 5 Health Tips if you sit at a computer all day

By Dr. Mercola

Following the recent advice which recommends that office workers should stand for at least 2 hours a day, here we explain what happens when we sit for too long and how to make the change to a healthier office life.



In recent centuries, advances in industry and technology have fundamentally changed the way many humans spend their waking hours. Where it was once commonplace to spend virtually all of those hours on your feet – walking, twisting, bending, and moving – it is now the norm to spend those hours sitting.

The modern-day office is built around sitting, such that you can conduct business – make phone calls, send e-mails and faxes, and even participate in video conferences – without ever leaving your chair.

But there's an inherent problem with this lifestyle. Your body was designed for near perpetual movement. It thrives when given opportunity to move in its fully intended range of motion and, as we're now increasingly seeing, struggles when forced to stay in one place for long periods.

## What Happens When You Sit for Too Long?

Studies looking at life in natural agriculture environments show that people in agrarian villages sit for about three hours a day. The average American office worker can sit for 13 to 15 hours a day.

The difference between a "natural" amount of sitting and modern, inappropriate amounts of sitting is huge, and accounts for negative changes at the molecular level.

According to Dr. James Levine, co-director of the Mayo Clinic and the Arizona State University Obesity Initiative, there are at least 24 different chronic diseases and conditions

associated with excessive sitting.

As he wrote in *Scientific American*: "Sitting for long periods is bad because the human body was not designed to be idle. I have worked in obesity research for several decades, and my laboratory has studied the effect of sedentary lifestyles at the molecular level all the way up to office design.

Lack of movement slows metabolism, reducing the amount of food that is converted to energy and thus promoting fat accumulation, obesity, and the litany of ills – heart disease, diabetes, arthritis – that come with being overweight. Sitting is bad for lean people, too.

For instance, sitting in your chair after a meal leads to high blood sugar spikes, whereas getting up after you eat can cut those spikes in half."

Not surprisingly, sitting for extended periods of time increases your risk for premature death. This is especially concerning given the fact that you may be vulnerable to these risks even if you are a fit athlete who exercises regularly.

It takes a toll on your mental health, too. Women who sit more than seven hours per day were found to have a 47% higher risk of depression than women who sit four hours or less.

There's really no question anymore that if you want to lower your risk of chronic disease, you've got to get up out of your chair. This is at least as important as regular exercise... and quite possibly even more so.



## 5 Tips for Better Health if you work at a computer

You might be thinking this sounds good in theory... but how do you translate your seated computer job into a standing one? It's easier than you might think. For starters, check out these essential tips for computer workers:

### 1. Stand Up

If you're lucky, your office may be one that has already implemented sit-stand workstations or even treadmill desks. Those who used such workstations easily replaced 25 percent of their sitting time with standing and boosted their well-being (while decreasing fatigue and appetite).

But if you don't have a specially designed desk, don't let that stop you. Prop your computer up on a stack of books, a printer, or even an overturned trash can and get on your feet.

When I travel in hotels, I frequently use the mini fridge or simply turn the wastebasket upside down and put it on top of the desk, and it works just fine.

### 2. Get Moving

Why simply stand up when you can move too? The treadmill desk, which was invented by Dr. Levine, is ideal for this, but again it's not the only option. You can walk while you're on the phone, walk to communicate with others in your office (instead of e-mailing), and even conduct walking meetings.

### 3. Monitor Your Screen Height

Whether you're sitting or standing, the top of

your computer screen should be level with your eyes, so you're only looking down about 10 degrees to view the screen. If it's lower, you'll move your head downward, which can lead to back and neck pain. If it's higher, it can cause dry eye syndrome.

### 4. Imagine Your Head as a Bowling Ball

Your head must be properly aligned to avoid undue stress on your neck and spine. Avoid craning your head forward, holding it upright instead. And while you're at it, practice chin retractions, or making a double chin, to help line up your head, neck, and spine.

### 5. Try the "Pomodoro Technique"

You know those little tomato-shaped (pomodoro is Italian for tomato) timers? Wind one up to 25 minutes (or set an online calculator). During this time, focus on your work intensely. When it goes off, take 5 minutes to walk, do jumping jacks, or otherwise take a break from your work. This helps you to stay productive while avoiding burnout.

### What's it really like to work while standing?

If you're curious... just try it. Reactions tend to be mixed, at least initially, but if you stick with it you will be virtually guaranteed to experience benefits. The Guardian, for instance, recently featured an article with a first-hand account of working while standing, and the author wasn't impressed.

He said "standing up to work felt like a horrible punishment" and lead to aches and decreased productivity.<sup>5</sup> I couldn't disagree more, but I will say that standing all day



takes some adjustment. However, many people feel better almost immediately. As one worker who uses an adjustable-height work desk said: "I definitely feel healthier standing while working as it causes me to be more focused on my posture and 'hold' myself better in terms of my stomach and shoulders especially."

Personally, standing more has worked wonders for me. I used to recommend intermittent movement, or standing up about once every 15 minutes, as a way to counteract the ill effects of sitting. Now, I've found an even better strategy, which is simply not sitting. I used to sit for 12 to 14 hours a day. Now, I strive to sit for less than one hour a day.

After I made this change, the back pain that I have struggled with for decades (and tried many different methods to relieve without lasting success) has disappeared. In addition to not sitting, I typically walk about 15,000 steps a day, in addition to, not in place of, my regular exercise program. I believe this combination of exercise, non-exercise activities like walking 10,000 steps a day, along with >



avoiding sitting whenever possible is the key to being really fit and enjoying a pain-free and joyful life.

## You're Not a Prisoner to Your Chair

If you're still sitting down while reading this... now's your chance – stand up! As Dr. Levine said: "We live amid a sea of killer chairs: adjustable, swivel, recliner, wing, club, chaise longue, sofa, arm, four-legged, three-legged, wood, leather, plastic, car, plane, train, dining and bar. That's the bad news. The good news is that you do not have to use them."

Many progressive workplaces are helping employees to stand and move more during the day. For instance, some corporations encourage "walk-and-talk" meetings and

e-mail-free work zones, and offer standing workstations and treadmill desks. But if yours isn't among them, take matters into your own hands. You may be used to sitting down when you get to work, but try, for a day, standing up instead.

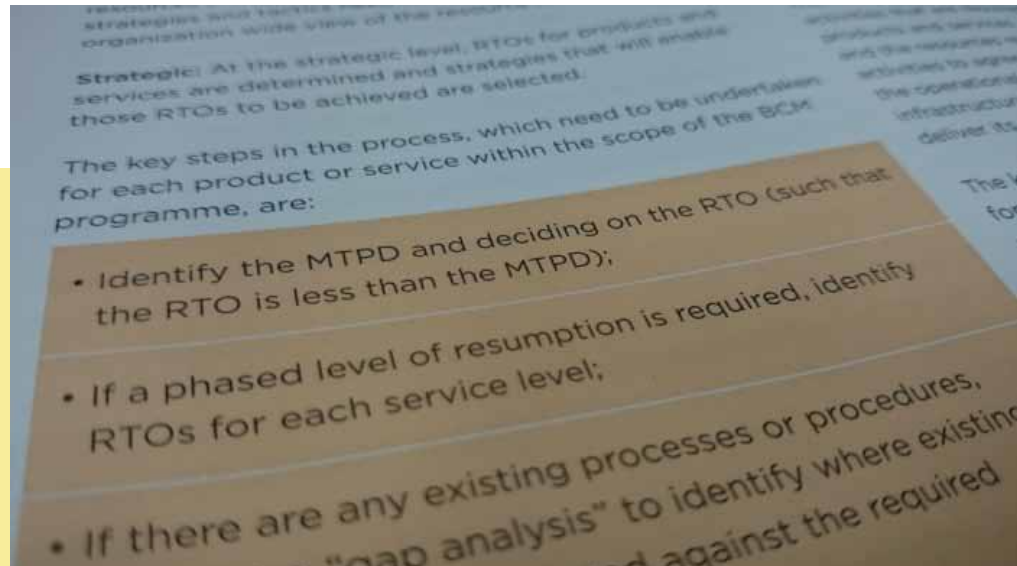
One day can turn into the next and the next, but please be patient and stick with it. Research shows that it can take anywhere from 18 to 254 days to build a new habit and have it feel automatic. Once you get to this point, you'll likely already be reaping the many rewards of not sitting, things like improved blood sugar and blood pressure levels, less body fat and a lower risk of chronic disease.



**ActiveDesking Sit/Stand Workstation is available from [www.computingplus.co.uk](http://www.computingplus.co.uk)**

## It's not big and it's not clever!

**BCM, BCP, RTO, RPO, BIA, CMT, IMT, MCA, MTPD, etc, etc... what on earth is that all about?**



In common with many industries, the business continuity world is awash with acronyms, abbreviations and jargon. And whilst this is all very well for your average business continuity manager or consultant when they're speaking to another business continuity 'expert', actually most business users aren't fluent in BCM-speak.

Put yourself in their shoes for a moment. If someone came to you asking you to do a whole load of seemingly new or additional stuff, who at best seemed to want to blind you with science and at worst appeared to be speaking complete and utter gobbledegook, how would you feel?

So if you want to engage the business, rather than having them glaze over when you talk to them, then why not speak in terms that the business understands? Otherwise there's a risk that the business won't buy-in to what you're trying to do, or there will be misunderstandings that can scupper your plans.

### Just in case you were wondering :

**BCM = business continuity management**

**BCP = business continuity plan**

**RTO = recovery time objective**

**RPO = recovery point objective**

**BIA = business impact analysis**

**CMT = crisis management team**

**MT = incident management team**

**MCA = mission critical activity**

**MTPD = maximum tolerable period of disruption**

(aaaargh!)



## Guide to working smarter, not harder

**With businesses all over the UK experiencing a fighting struggle with productivity, Privilege Promotions offers their advice to help them work smarter, increasing efficiency within the workplace.**

The UK economy is continuing to improve, however one area where little progress is being made is in the improvement of productivity. Increasing productivity would help to drive further economic growth, higher wages and better living standards. But, as Privilege Promotions points out, a sustainable long-term improvement in productivity relies not on people working harder and for longer hours. Instead, it should be about employers guiding their workforces on how to work smarter and equipping them to deliver more. Privilege Promotions suggests that businesses need to invest in hiring, training and retaining skilled workers, as well as providing them with the right tools to do their jobs more effectively in order to improve productivity.

Privilege Promotions has revealed five ways that they believe businesses are able to worker smarter, not harder.

### Take more breaks

Privilege Promotions say that there is a story about a woodcutter whose saw gets blunter as time passes but he continues to cut down trees. If the woodcutter were to

stop sawing, sharpen his saw, and go back to cutting the tree with a sharp blade, he would actually save time and effort in the long run. In business "sharpening the saw" means preserving and enhancing the greatest asset you have, which is you. It means having a balanced program for self-renewal in the four areas of life: physical, social/emotional, mental and spiritual.

On average, the brain can only concentrate for 90 minutes and then it needs 15 minutes of rest. By taking breaks every 90 minutes, this will allow the mind and body to refresh and be ready to fire off another 90-minute period of high activity.

### Take naps

Research shows that naps lead to improvement in cognitive function, creative thinking, and memory performance. In particular, napping benefits the learning process by helping a person take in and retain information better. This is helpful for people who work in jobs that requires them to research and learn new things every day.



## Spend time in nature

Research suggests that spending time in nature can help reset your attention span and relax the mind. "Walking through a busy city requires too much attention to relax the brain enough to reset your focus level," points out Privilege Promotions. However, spending time in nature allows the mind to fully relax and unwind, which helps people to focus longer when they return to work.

## Move and work in blocks

The idea is that you set up at various workspaces to get chunks of work done throughout the day. This starts with a clear, thought-out to-do-list: You create a plan for what you will accomplish at each location so you can immediately jump into those

tasks. The important factor is to have a clear finishing point based on the task list rather than the time you will move to a new location. When you do move, to do it by walking and take a break from looking at a screen.

## Check emails first thing

Most people advise not to check emails first but they find that it helps them to be more productive during the day. Checking emails first helps to connect with other members of the team and make sure everyone is all on the same page before the day begins. As well as this, dealing with important issues first often helps people to make quick decisions about whether their day needs to be adjusted to fit in with what everyone else is doing or whether they can proceed with the tasks they've already planned.

## Corporate travel safety app now available to consumers

A corporate security app that provides crucial travel safety information for employees worldwide is being made available to private individuals in the UK for the first time.



The Safeture consumer app makes business trips as well as personal holidays abroad just that bit less of a worry by providing real-time local safety information 24/7. This includes health alerts, severe weather warnings, local emergencies, civil unrest and terror attacks.

The free app, the first of its kind, draws on information from thousands of sources all around the world, including foreign offices, government agencies, aid organisations and key data providers like meteorological agencies and seismological institutes.

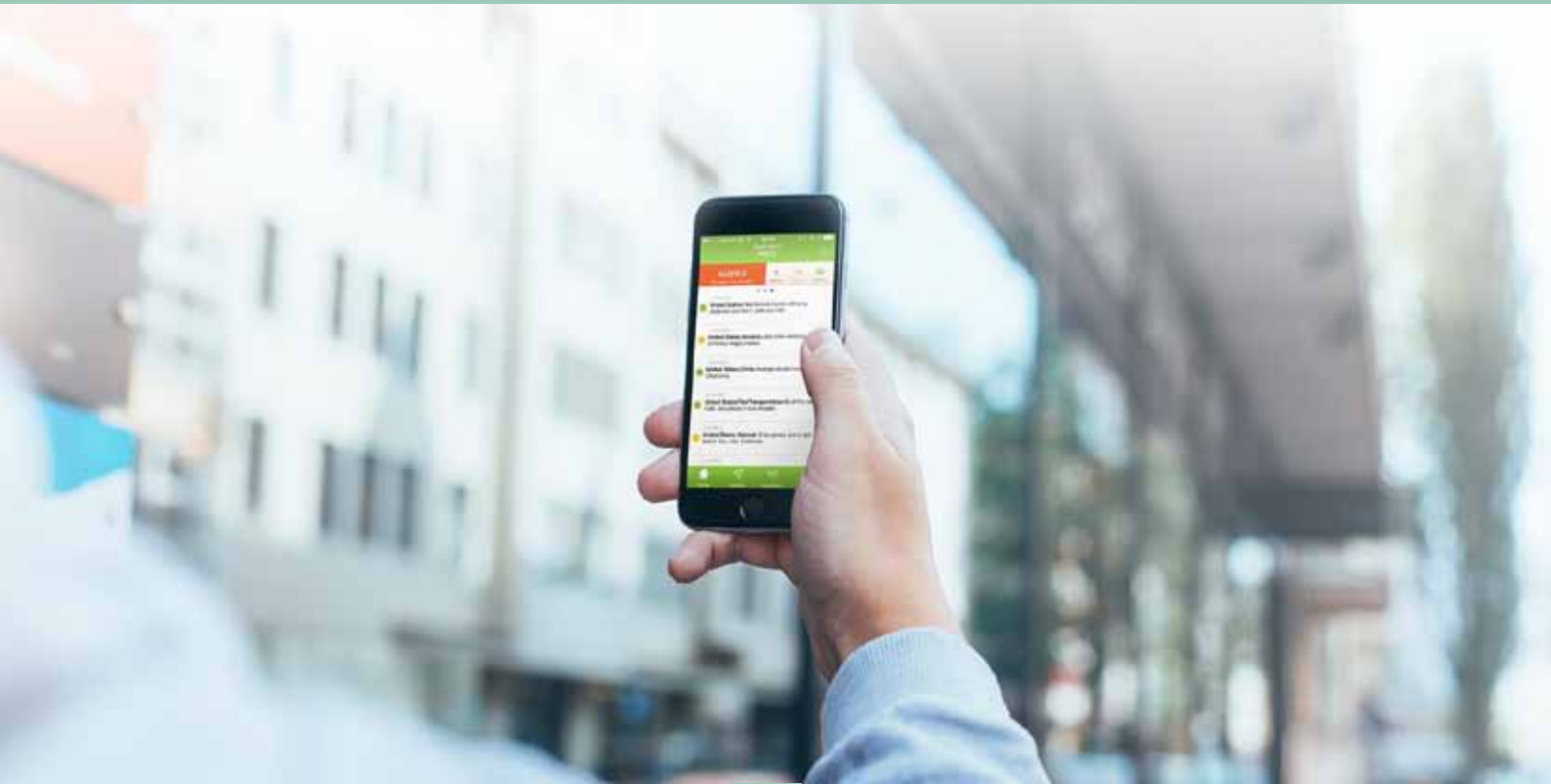
It offers business travelers and holiday makers insights into what's happening locally anywhere around the world. It also provides a one-click connection to local emergency response teams in the event of a potentially

dangerous situation arising. And, users can choose to share their location with family, friends and work colleagues so they know your whereabouts at any given time.

Safeture is being launched in the UK at a time when people are increasingly more adventurous in their choice of travel destinations and more businesses choose to trade in higher risk areas as part of a globalization growth strategy. At the same time, global risk levels over the next ten years – covering incidents including international conflicts, extreme weather events and terrorist attacks – are expected to be at their highest state of alert, according to a World Economic Forum report.

The app was created by Global Warning





System, which counts ERV, one of the largest providers of private and business travel insurance, and UK-based security firm G4S as partners and corporate users of its travel safety solutions.

"Personal safety depends on having quick access to accurate information about local incidents," says Andreas Rodman, CEO of Global Warning System. "Everyone should have the right to access information that will keep them safe. Most people today carry a smartphone and Safeture was created to give people fast access to life-saving information, something that we saw an especially clear need for during tragic events such as the SARS epidemic or the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami."

The app is free to download from iTunes and Google Play with an initial trial period until September.

## See what's happening now

Get real-time warnings, alerts and other useful information sent to your mobile via push notifications or data message

## Get local news

Use country-specific warning and alerts and local news in English to stay up-to-date wherever you visit with

## Connect with SOS response

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## Would you feign illness to ditch a dull dinner?

As the summer party and wedding season heats up, research from leading Brasserie & Bar, Browns, has revealed that celebrations could be put on ice, as a growing number of people in the UK are getting choosy when it comes to parties - citing factors such as the method of invite, the other people invited and the food and drink choices on offer as determining factors in whether a party goes with a bang, or a clang.

The research found that we often get stuck at the first hurdle and struggle with our guest list, with one in ten of us inviting everybody, including those we didn't like in order to keep the peace.

Identifying dream party guests was easy though, with 38% choosing Ant & Dec for heads of the table, followed up by 23% citing Dawn French.

It's not just who to invite that poses a problem for party planners either, as the research also unveiled that 51% of us have switched seats to escape someone boring, and 43% of us went so far as to feign illness to leave a party early – showing that creating a seating chart isn't just reserved for weddings, and is now a must for a 21st century soirée.

We're not fully immersed in modern practices though, and despite being a society for which Twitter and Facebook are second nature, 54% of those quizzed in the research would still prefer to receive an invite through the post, with only 6% of people opting for an e-invite as their top choice.

The brasserie group's Chief Host, Laura Richardson, who is responsible for making sure that every celebration occasion hosted at Browns goes without a hitch, proffered her expert advice on the early planning stages and suggests; "ask the right questions like 'would I spend £X amount on them normally?', that way you'll avoid any issues and will end up with a guest list you're happy with."

With the research also finding that the majority of people rely on a series of 'safe' subjects at parties which include your job, the weather and popular television shows, Laura suggests, "you can keep the

conversations flowing by implementing a rotating seating chart after each course, this will make sure guests get the opportunity to talk to new people and move people on from lack of common ground."

When it comes to choosing where to go, opting for a restaurant that gives guests a new dining experience could make your party the one to beat. Currently only 18% of us are brave enough to be influenced by a host's recommendation, so an unusual dining layout would give your guests ample opportunity to try things they would otherwise have looked over.

"We enjoy getting together with close friends and family to celebrate key moments in our lives, but 72% of us still get most worried that no-one will show up, and one in ten of us will miss out on a party completely because we don't like the stress.

"This is why Browns has introduced my role of Chief Host, and I'll be on hand to show you the dos and don'ts when it comes to planning a party, whether you're preparing to pop the question or celebrating a new addition to the family, our restaurants endeavour to make every meal, celebratory or not, an experience to remember."

Juggling the combination of good atmosphere, music that doesn't drown out conversation, with enough space and time to enjoy the party may seem like an impossible feat, but the trick is to be prepared. To help guests, Laura's tips, which can be found on the Browns Brasserie & Bar Facebook page - including suggestions on pre-ordering, planning out your day and picking the perfect location, as well as a host of other tips.