

## The health fix

Office-based work and sedentary jobs can make it difficult for you to focus on your health from nine-to-five, but it is important to keep your well-being at the forefront of everything you do. **Jo Caruana** speaks to the experts to find out how to inject a health-kick into your working day.



**A**s employees, office workers and business people, statistics show that a lot of us are getting less healthy.

In fact, over the last three decades, the health of employees has been negatively affected by a whole host of influences, including longer working hours, more stress, less time for breaks, the technology revolution and increased expectations.

So how can you address that, whether for yourself or your team?

Naturally, your diet is a big part of staying healthy. But, while we all know what we should eat, it can be hard to follow the rules all the time while working long hours in front of a computer.

As Dr Mario Caruana, a registered dietician and nutritionist, explains, it is well known that our sedentary lifestyle has predisposed us to a variety of medical conditions, including elevated sugar levels, hypertension and distorted blood

cholesterol levels.

"These conditions form part of what is known as the 'metabolic syndrome', which increases the likelihood of developing cardiovascular disease and diabetes," explains Dr Caruana. "Likewise, stress can play an important role in this metabolic syndrome. This means that, in the majority of cases, stressful situations make a person more sedentary and might lead to 'comfort eating' as a method of relief. This can naturally lead to a negative impact on a person's health."

Speaking about how to directly tackle work-related issues such as mental problems, eye problems, heart problems, a loss of muscle mass and flexibility, posture and back problems, and weight gain - all of which can be linked to a sedentary lifestyle - Fabian Vella, the managing director for YUE Healthier Living in Naxxar, encourages people to get motivated.

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