

Americans spend an average of 11 hours per day staring at some type of screen – texting, typing, or reading – and often put their body into less-than-ideal postures that can take a toll on health, wellbeing, and productivity.

The good news is that Chubb Global Risk Advisors can offer some simple wellness “rituals” that can help people work, feel, and live better in the age of technology. When talking to your healthcare professional about enhancing wellness, consider whether some of these quick rituals would be useful to your individual situation. These rituals take aim at all the parts of the day: waking up, working, chores and downtime, and finally, all-important sleep time.

Waking Up

When you are first waking up in the morning, these simple practices may help set the stage for a less-stressed, more productive day.

A morning stretch: Raising your arms over your head and lifting your head and chest as you inhale opens the lungs, allowing fresh oxygen in, which provides so many health benefits. A deep exhale rids the body of stale air. (Note that a true deep breath comes from the diaphragm and will expand your entire torso 360 degrees!)

Take a few minutes to meditate or simply set an intention for your day. Circling back to this morning intention can provide inspiration when fatigue creeps up later in the day.

Don't skip on nutrition. Ready to-go smoothies with vitalizing ingredients (you can prepare the ingredients the night before) can energize without adding time-consuming cooking to a busy morning. They also set the tone for another wellness essential: staying well hydrated throughout the day.

At Work

When at your workspace at home or in the office, check in regularly (at least hourly) to assess if you are maintaining a healthy posture. You can conduct your own ergonomic evaluation in a “FEWE” steps – moving from bottom to top to examine:

- Are your **Feet** flat on the floor?
- Is your work surface at **Elbow** height?
- Are your **Wrists** straight?
- Is the top third of your monitor at **Eye** height and your screen an arm's distance away?

If you are standing at work, at a checkout or assembly line for example, take a few moments to organize your workstation and identify ways to minimize stress on

your body. For example, make sure you don't have to overextend to reach needed materials or carry heavy items any further distance than necessary.

Take breaks from your usual work posture (every 30 minutes is ideal) and make the most of them. Consider doing gentle motions that counteract some of the potentially harmful repetitive postures technology can put you in throughout a day. For example, when you sit at a computer for long periods, it is easy for the spine to move into a C-shape rather than its natural S-shape. Gentle backbends, ‘cobra poses’ or stretches that move your arms behind your shoulders can be useful. Chin tucks are an essential move that help correct forward head, or “tech neck.”

Simple stretches you can do at home or at work can counteract some of the potentially harmful repetitive postures technology can put you in throughout the day.



Daily Chores and Downtime

Wellness rituals can be deployed anytime – whether you’re watching the kids at the playground or washing the dishes at home. One simple, effective exercise is a calf raise which can stretch and strengthen legs and core. Another simple, high-impact practice: When lying on a floor or bed taking a break, try a single-knee-to-chest move. Hold each side for a few deep breaths, alternating legs. This can potentially provide multiple benefits – from releasing the lower back and stretching the hip flexor to improving digestion.

At Rest

A universal challenge all tech athletes face comes at the end of the day – putting technology away. A great wellness routine is to turn your phone (and laptop or tablet) off an hour before bed – or at least put it into sleep mode. If, even with technology tucked away, you find it difficult to fall or stay asleep, try to focus on the positives that come from simply ‘resting.’ Perhaps give deep breathing a try. Focusing on difficulty sleeping can elevate stress and exacerbate the problem.

While technology creates many advantages, it has also made life more hectic and compounds the stress we ‘tech athletes’ place on our bodies and minds every day. One last ritual to consider anytime is adapting the mantra: **Pause, Breathe, and Move.**

- **Pause** to realign your body and remember your morning intention
- **Breathe**, welcoming wonderful oxygen into your body and mind
- And **Move**. Sprinkle whatever movements you can throughout your day, even when doing chores and at play

Technology is here to stay – it’s our job to make it work for us, not against us. Working with your healthcare professional, you can set some simple wellness rituals that help you minimize negative impacts and align your use of technology with your health and wellness goals.

To learn more about how Chubb Global Risk Advisors can help enhance the wellbeing of your technology users, contact us today.

Globalriskadvisors@chubb.com

866-357-3797 (toll-free)

www.chubb.com/cgra

Today’s technology users – which includes just about everyone these days – need to be purposeful in adopting practices to help optimize their wellbeing.

About the Author

Claire Wilson, DPT, CEAS, is a Certified Ergonomics Assessment Specialist at Chubb Global Risk Advisors and a Doctor of Physical Therapy whose areas of expertise include human factors, ergonomics, and environmental design. She believes that that prevention is key to reducing workplace injuries, claims, and healthcare costs. Claire develops successful ergonomics, safety, and wellness programs and continues to seek innovative solutions to meet business needs.

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