



# Revitalize your body for 2022



## GUEST CORNER

LIZE LUBBE &  
LUANNE SFORZA

The World Health Organization identified physical inactivity as the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality, following high blood pressure, tobacco use, high blood glucose and obesity.

Looking back over the last 2 years since the onset of COVID, many of our work and social habits have changed. Life has become much more sedentary by working from home and binge-watching TV. How can we revitalize our bodies and our lives? Simply said, “with movement!”

### THE PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF AN ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

Movement helps us physically in many ways, including lowering high blood pressure, reducing injuries from osteoporosis, reducing joint and muscle stiffness and pain, and improving strength, balance and stability. Equally, movement has psychological and emotional benefits including improving sleep habits, reducing chronic fatigue syndrome, and increasing our physical strength and balance.

### INCREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AS A NEW YEAR'S OBJECTIVE

As we start 2022, it is a good time to re-examine our physical and mental well-being. As physical therapists, we focus on the physical aspect of our bodies through movement and exercise which helps to get our bodies in balance again. Take stock of how much you move and exercise daily. If you exercise regularly, you might be active for 30-60 minutes on most days, but how much do you move the remainder of the day?

Regular movement every day and throughout the day is critical to your well-being. The American Institute of Cancer Research recommends “to take mini breaks from sitting” aside from the 30 minutes of moderate exercise on most days. “If you reduce sitting by 5 minutes per hour, at the end of the day you’ve shaved off an hour off your total sitting time”.

According to Alan Hege, professor of ergonomic at Cornell University, “standing, aside from being a static posture can lead to varicose veins, foot and back pain.” Hege recommends a balance of 20-8-2; i.e., sitting 20 minutes out of every half hour at work, standing for 8 minutes and moving around for at least

2 minutes. Another idea from a recent article in the New York Times suggests taking “exercise snacks” throughout the day: just like grabbing a quick snack, grab “short bursts of exercise such as pace when you’re on the phone, do wall push-ups, lunges or walk stairs.”

### SUGGESTIONS FOR MOVEMENT-FILLED DAILY LIVING

As general suggestions:

- during TV commercials, stand up and march in place for 2 minutes
- fill your water glass halfway so you need to get up more often to refill it
- frequently move from sit to stand and repeat 10 times
- climb stairs as often as possible

If you have a deskbound job and are unable to leave your desk every hour do the following:

- move your pelvis for 2 minutes. Slowly, roll pelvis forward and back, rock pelvis from side to side and finish with pelvic circles in clockwise and counterclockwise directions. Your low back would greatly benefit as lumbar discs require movement for blood flow and optimal health
- rock back and forth from heels to toes for 2 minutes stretching toes and Achilles tendon
- roll feet out on a tennis ball to stimulate the bottom of the foot nerve endings and massage the foot muscles

If you have a standing job or when standing at the computer, do the following:

- rocking back and forth from heels to toes 2 minutes - this will wake up your foot bones, arches and muscles that suffer from excessive compressive loads due to long periods of standing
- shift weight from one leg to other leg and circling around perimeters of your feet, for 2 minutes, reducing body weight on one side
- march in place for 2 minutes
- stand on one leg for 30 seconds at a time. Try squeezing your buttocks first, then lifting one leg to activate large hip muscles to help unload your feet, rather than sinking into them.

You can sit or stand for these exercises:

- roll your shoulders backwards and forwards 10 times, repeat for 2 minutes
- squeeze shoulder blades together 10 times, then reach arms up overhead 10 times. Do this by clasping hands together and lifting arms and shoulders towards the ceiling, feeling the length through your spine.

Movement needn't be vigorous or challenging, instead should be easy, pleasurable

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–Lize Lubbe & Luanne Sforza

Physical Therapists at Lize Lubbe Physical Therapy

and pain-free. If you experience pain or discomfort, try reducing the effort or the range of motion, and/or move slower or try a different movement that you can perform without pain. Life should be filled with movement that is safe and within your ability, whatever that may be. Whether it is 2 minutes every 30 minutes or 5 minutes every hour, your goal is not the amount of time but the idea of just moving your body every hour of the day.

*Lize Lubbe and Luanne Sforza are physical therapists at Lize Lubbe Physical Therapy. Lize Lubbe is the owner of Lize Lubbe Physical Therapy located in Cross River. She holds a B.Sc. in physiotherapy and offers over 25 years of clinical experience in both South Africa and the United States. Learn more by calling 914-875-9430, emailing contact@lizelubbept.com, or visiting lizelubbept.com.*



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892 NY-35, Cross River, NY 10518  
(blue office building)

914.875.9430

www.lizelubbept.com

contact@lizelubbept.com

