



## Timely Information for Personal Success

# It's Time to Make a Stand (Literally)

By Aaron J. Allie

One of life's merriest moments is watching your son or daughter's first unassisted steps. Anticipation builds as your child progresses from rolling over to holding their head up, then crawling and standing. You offer a caring hand of encouragement, and the camera is never too far away. With all the excitement surrounding this event, one wonders why humans find so much time to sit so much later in life.

In fact, it's suggested that in a full day Americans spend less than 10% or 90 minutes on their feet. Furthermore health experts theorize sedentary lifestyles as a bigger factor for chronic illness than what we eat or don't eat.

### We Sit Too Much...

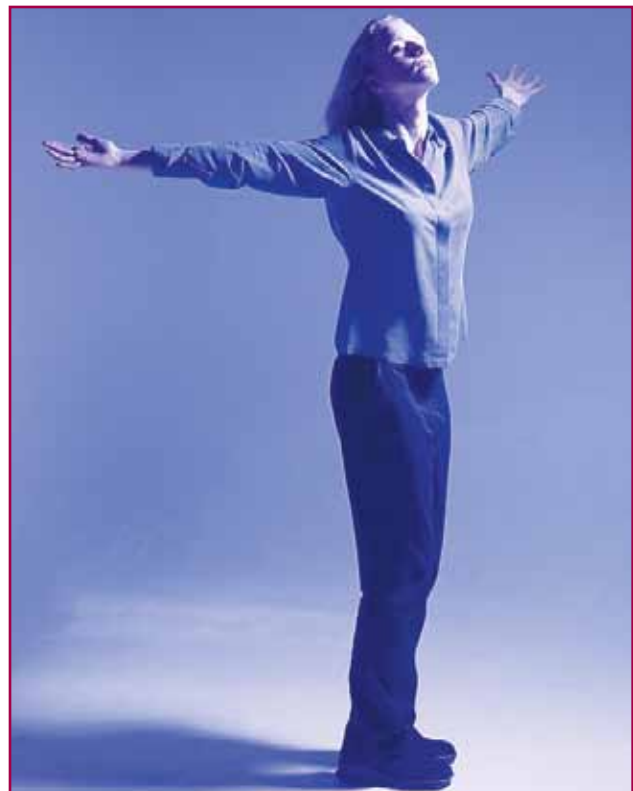
Modern technology is creating a mechanical need to sit. A typical day will require multiple stops at the computer, an errand in the car and a spin on a riding lawn mower. However, Ryan Bailey, a physical therapist in Wisconsin is beginning to see a shift: "Over the next 20 years, all places humans occupy will involve movement. Companies are creating ways to keep employees on their metatarsals. Many businesses will accommodate for standing offices or provide exercise facilities or trails on company grounds."

### ... When we are not Wired to Sit

God molded your body with tens of thousands of muscles fibers surrounding the hip joint.

Yet using them for 10% of the day is like driving a Corvette at 5 miles per hour. It's not something to take for granted. Just as you have the ability to move, you also can easily deteriorate. Sitting for long periods leads to weaknesses or posture related problems like kyphosis, lordosis, "mouse shoulder," sciatic nerve irritation, and large belly syndrome, just to name a few.

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# Blueprints for Fitness Success

- ❖ Change some aspect of your workouts every month.
  - ❖ Contact a certified personal trainer for new exercises, techniques or a program tailored to you.
  - ❖ Diversify your assets between diet and exercise, rather than focusing painstakingly on one.
  - ❖ Find a dedicated workout partner and learn a new activity like racquet ball or rollerblading.
  - ❖ Get a new pair of shoes or download some new music when you feel the workout “blah’s”.
- ❖ Give yourself the guilt trip by assembling an accountability network of co-workers, friends and family.
  - ❖ Take your workout outdoors. Exercisers spend more time on the hiking trails than on treadmills.
  - ❖ Think of the small picture. Which is less intimidating: Losing 2 lbs. this week or 100 lbs. this year?
  - ❖ Try a new fitness trend like stand-up paddling, fat tire biking, slacklining or an adventure race.

- Aaron Allie

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Email: [info@impacttrainingcenter.net](mailto:info@impacttrainingcenter.net)

**Publisher:** Scott Kolpien  
**Health Consultant:** Aaron Allie  
**Managing Editor:** Mike Jacquart

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## Questions and Answers

### Time to Plant Roots

**Q:** I've heard some trainers compare fitness to gardening. Can you elaborate?

**A:** As spring approaches, many of us will willingly trade our snow shovels to start working in our gardens... even the arduous process of weeding. Some of these weeds will pop right out, while others are more firmly rooted – and it's the same thing in fitness. As many as 60% of New Years' exercisers' ambitions were too shallow and have long been uprooted.

Just as seeds need a good base to grow, physical needs also need good “roots”. This means doing more than just showing up at the gym with an ounce or two of hope. Then, when external issues like happy hour or a snowstorm blow in, the exerciser bails due to the lack of “roots.” It takes time to build a root system, but it's worth the effort to become a truly solid “garden that is you.”

- Aaron Allie

## Make a Stand

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No matter what degree of movement you get from work, home often becomes the landing pad, with remote in hand. Using the young children example again, Bailey elaborates:

“One of the best physical movements to observe is seeing a grandparent pick up their grandchild. It produces both gratification for the grandparent and a great visual for the child looking up to a strong individual.”

Unfortunately, many grandparents shy away from this activity because they're fearful of injury. An exercise program designed by a personal trainer or physical therapist using body weights, resistance tubing and stairs can make a big difference. Strong bodies create a secure presence for today's youth and allow for great laughter with active kids.

## Stand Strong

It is your responsibility to stand up and take care of your body, not just for yourself, but for your employer and your family. Just as Theodore Roosevelt Sr. inspired his ailing, asthmatic son to exercise and become strong, you need to stand strong as a pillar for your family. It worked out OK for Teddy, who now gazes out atop his South Dakota perch at a much flabbier nation. How do you want you be remembered: on the couch decaying in front of the TV, or sword drawn, leading the charge? ■

*Transforming from fat kid to fit, young adult, Aaron has helped create other great fitness stories for clients in Colorado and Wisconsin for 15 years. He's helped propel athletes to excel in college sports and the handicapped to mountain summits. Matching a degree in journalism with a quest for adventure, he has written fitness columns for organizations like Alta Resources, the Lockheed Martin Corporation, newsprint and now “Lifestyle Tips.” Aaron's workouts usually push the limits of the outdoors either on the working end of a 2-man saw or hiking above 14,000 feet elevation.*