

Press Release 15th April 2024

Counteract the Health Risks of Sitting by Introducing Movements to Improve Concentration, Productivity and Wellbeing!

Whether it's scrolling through your phone, responding to emails or watching television, so much of daily life revolves around sitting in a chair.

As reported in the *Daily Telegraph*¹ recently, research, first highlighted as long ago as 1953 in a Medical Research Council paper, has shown that sitting for long periods is associated with a plethora of physical and mental health complications, including weight gain, Type 2 diabetes, cancer, a greater risk of heart disease and higher levels of 'bad' cholesterol. Since then, investigations have repeatedly uncovered the dangers of prolonged sitting.

James Betts, Professor of Metabolic Physiology at the University of Bath, suggests that you interrupt your sedentary time by taking activity breaks every 20 minutes with two minutes of standing or movement to negate sedentary harms.

Inspired by this advice, the International Stress Management Association (ISMA^{UK}) are holding a practical, hands-on webinar on Wednesday 17th April entitled *No-Fluff Yoga: Simple movements you can do from your desk to boost energy and productivity*. Jamie Abrams, a senior yoga teacher and somatic educator, moderated by Becca Clayton of Tonic Wellbeing, will be taking us through a series of simple, effective movements and practices that can all be done from your desk and seamlessly integrated into any working day, thus helping us counteract the effects of a sedentary life.

Jamie says, "Poor posture and sitting for long periods of time, with little or no movement, doesn't just impact negatively on our wellbeing, it also reduces productivity, concentration and creativity. By adopting some easy strategies for countering the negative effects of prolonged sitting, you can combat Zoom fatigue, and be empowered to make movement choices that will boost your energy, productivity, and creativity."

Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMA^{UK}, said, "ISMA^{UK} is delighted to be hosting this webinar on counteracting sedentary lifestyles. Research has shown the physical health risks associated with a sedentary lifestyle, but less well appreciated is that being sedentary also comes with increased likelihood of anxiety, stress, depression and diminished wellbeing. Studies² have found that those who sit for seven hours a day, being physically inactive, are three times as likely to have symptoms of depression than those who sit for fewer than four hours and get the recommended amount of daily physical activity. This year ISMA^{UK} marks 50 years raising the profile of stress and mental health issues, campaigning against the stigma associated with them, whilst promoting resilience and wellbeing, so that each of us can look forward to a healthier and more hopeful future."

¹ 'How Sitting Down All Day is Slowly Killing You', *Daily Telegraph*, 15th March 2024, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/health-fitness/conditions/heart-health/sedentary-exercise-weight-desk-sitting-health-diabetes/>

² <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/minding-the-body/201403/what-sitting-does-your-psyche>

Notes for Editors

- **No-Fluff Yoga: Simple movements you can do from your desk to boost energy and productivity.** For more information on ISMA^{UK}'s next online webinar, being held on Wednesday 17th April from 12:00 to 13:00, go to <https://isma.org.uk/interactive-webinars>. Places may be booked in advance on <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/no-fluff-yoga-tickets-872454112737>. Registration is free to ISMA^{UK} members. Non-members are asked to pay £10.
- **Jamie Abrams** is a senior yoga teacher and somatic educator who has been teaching yoga and facilitating and coaching in the wellbeing industry internationally for over 20 years. She trains teachers in Embodied Yoga Principles and Sleep Recovery Yoga systems. In addition, Jamie facilitates her own masterclasses and courses, both in person and online. Her eclectic background, education and knowledge allow her to make even difficult tasks accessible.
- **Becca Clayton** is Founder and Director of Tonic Wellbeing, an experienced wellbeing professional and performance coach. She is passionate about integrating wellbeing into the heart of business. Tonic Wellbeing helps organisations of all sizes create healthier and happier workforces. With a focus on the pillars of health, the Tonic team inspire behaviour change, drive people performance and boost resilience. The solutions they curate are bespoke and blended – reflecting the changing nature of workspaces and our world today.
- **The International Stress Management Association (ISMA^{UK})** has been the leading professional body for workplace and personal stress management, wellbeing and performance, promoting sound knowledge and best practice in stress management, resilience, wellbeing and mental health for 50 years in 2024. ISMA^{UK} practitioners and consultants provide stress management services to individuals and businesses, assisting around 40,000 people who need professional help with stress-related issues every year. ISMA^{UK} endorses and uses the HSE guidelines for managing stress in the workplace. To find out more about ISMA^{UK}, visit www.isma.org.uk.
- **Press Interviews**
For all press and media enquiries please contact Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMA^{UK}, for an immediate response on +44 (0) 77 688 78910 or at chair@isma.org.uk.