

Occupational physical activity is an important factor in body composition, flexibility, and aerobic capacity

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Being physically active is important for overall health and fitness. Now, researchers in India have demonstrated that occupational physical activity is an important factor in body composition, flexibility, and aerobic capacity. They investigated fitness and physical parameters, such as percentage body fat, body mass index, aerobic capacity, weight, strength, and flexibility in a group of men between the ages of 18 and 30 years. Half the men had sedentary desk jobs, the others had physical jobs in construction. It was perhaps an obvious finding, but those in sedentary work tended towards obesity, larger waist to hip circumference and poor performance in most of the fitness tests.

Prachi Patel and Rauf Iqbal of Industrial Engineering and Manufacturing Systems, NITIE, in Mumbai, India, also showed that [construction workers](#) had superior back flexibility, trunk lift scores, and aerobic capacity. Office workers had strong hands but that was as far as it went in terms of strength comparison. However, the team found

no significant difference in strength (pinch, explosive leg and back) and endurance (upper and core body) tests between the two groups.

"Physical fitness and health lifestyle habits have been reported to lower the risk of death from disease, foster healthy muscles, joints and bones, and enhance personal function and [mental health](#)," the team writes. Physical strength and fitness are important in manual work but much less so in office work, that much is perhaps obvious. However, there is a need to ensure that the increasing numbers of those of us with sedentary jobs achieve comparable strength and fitness for the sake of health and all the implications of the burden of ill health on individuals and society. There is thus an urgent need to encourage sport and fitness regimes in the deskbound.

More information: Rauf Iqbal et al. Comparative analysis of Health Related Physical Fitness Levels among the Young Male Workers Performing Sedentary and Heavy Occupational Physical Activity, *International Journal of Forensic Engineering and Management* (2020). DOI: [10.1504/IJFEM.2019.10028596](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJFEM.2019.10028596)

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