

# Move more, sit less !

## **How long have you been sitting for today ?**

The mechanisation of modern farming has reduced the physical activity levels of most farmers. There's no doubt that in turn, this shift has contributed to a range of health problems, including cardiovascular disease, obesity and type 2 diabetes. Farmers are known to have higher rates of high blood pressure and overweight/obesity than the rest of the population.

We all need to be sitting much less, whether at work, rest or play. Research shows that we need to do 30 minutes of physical activity/day AND minimise our sitting time to reduce our risk of heart disease. Clearly there are times when farmers are more likely to be sitting for prolonged times such as seeding and harvest time.

## **What can farmers do about this ?**

1. Schedule (and stick to) regular breaks during sowing/harvesting periods to minimise fatigue and change postures to reduce aches/pains. If need be, set an alarm on your phone to remind you to move !
2. When taking breaks eg re-fuelling, make sure you stand, stretch and walk. le don't just sit and eat.
3. Make sure you walk some distance to the ute/house for breaks, don't drive as close as possible to them !
4. Stretch at the end of the day and avoid sitting when relaxing eg when watching TV/talking on phone
5. Walk rather than using vehicles for short trips – every bit of movement helps.
6. Continue to get active physical activity for 30 minutes per day eg walking/vigorous farm and garden work

**Are you interested in developing a short film depicting exercises** to assist with managing fatigue/stiffness due to prolonged sitting ? If so, contact Sally Fisher, Healthy Farmers Adviser, PPSA on 0410 473 167.

More information ? See <http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/page/active-farming/farmer-fitness> and <http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/driving-change/Heart-Week/Pages/default.aspx>

*Thanks to Sally Fisher, Healthy Farmers Advisor, PPSA for providing this resource.  
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