

# TAKE YOUR BODY TO WORK DAY

From 9 to 5, your mind is on the job—but what about the rest of you? Eleven experts tell how to keep your physical self purring right along. By Carol Mithers

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HERE'S NOTHING SENSUAL ABOUT a typical day at a typical office—hours on end of sedentary muscles and overstressed minds, stale coffee, recycled air, computer screens glowing beneath hard fluorescent lights. It's easy to forget you have a body, much less one that can be vividly, luxuriously alive. So we asked 11 women with careers focused around the physical—a Broadway dancer, a famous chef, and two Olympians, among them—how to keep our active, sexy, pleasure-loving sides with us as we think and argue our way through work, from first thing in the morning until we pull ourselves out of the office at night.

## 7:00 A.M.

### Don't jump out of bed. Allow your body to awaken.

"I stretch as soon as I get up. I'll point and flex my toes, do slow shoulder rolls in each direction, and clasp my hands behind me, while standing, then fold forward to stretch my whole body. That gets everything in line." —*Swin Cash, forward for the Detroit Shock, WNBA all-star, and former Olympian*  
"When I wake, I make a mental note of how I feel physically. It lets me move in a way that prepares me for success. Usually, I'll have something warm to drink—the warmth creates a sense of security, relaxes me, and gives me the time I need to take care of myself. And I always open the blinds; sunshine makes my body feel alive and strong." —*Susan Mitchell, New York Pilates studio owner and author of The Tao of Movement*

## 7:30 to 8:00 A.M.

### Honor your skin.

"I use a great body lotion every single morning. It's a sign of self-respect and selfcaring, even if nobody else notices. It means that even under your business attire, you know the female side of you is still there." —*Robin Coe-Hutshing, founder of Studio at Fred Segal, a boutique of cosmetics, lotions, candles, and custom fragrances, Santa Monica*

"You don't want a bra that pinches or pokes so that all day you're thinking you can't wait to get home and take it off. Wearing a soft, lovely fabric against your skin really makes you feel better. I remember reading in a biography of Katharine Hepburn that she always insisted on silk underclothes. She said, 'With silk, I walk differently.'" —*Lisa Norman, owner of Lisa Norman Lingerie, Santa Monica*



## 9:00 A.M.

### The minute you get to work, figure out when you're going to take a break.

"I'd write it into my schedule—a class, if possible, or even ten minutes to meditate. Letting work take over and forgetting physicality is forgetting that life requires balance." —*Francesca Harper, singer, actress, choreographer, and dancer in the Broadway show The Color Purple*

"If you have time for exercise, even 30 minutes, make it as intense as possible and try to get out of your head. In preseason training, when I have to do a lot of running, I listen to music. It helps me stop thinking and push harder." —*Dianne DeNecochea, professional beach volleyball player*

## 10:30 A.M.

### Imagine yourself in action.

"In my office, I have a picture of someone rowing on a lake. It's always right there as a reminder that rowing, when I did it full-time, was the essence of what I was about. A picture of an activity you enjoy can transport you, even bring up the physical feelings you associate with it." —*Jan Palchikoff, Olympic rower and vice president, sports programs and community affairs, Special Olympics Southern California*

"There are two Web sites I track all day long that let me watch people surf and check out local surf breaks. It makes me feel the same way as when I'm out there surfing myself—when every cell of my being is alive and I'm completely aware, connected to the simple rhythm of the ocean." —*Mary Cappelli, high school teacher and competitive Malibu surfer in the "mature woman" category*

## 11:45 A.M.

### Move the limbs.

"There are easy things you can do in an office—once an hour, if possible. For example, arch backward in your chair; reach your arms up to the ceiling, and stretch. Or extend your arms back behind you, lace your hands together, and squeeze the shoulder blades while lifting your breastbone up. Or just stand up and shift your hips side to side, putting weight on one foot, then the other." —*Lesley Powell, director of Movements Afoot Pilates studio in New York City*

"When I'm stuck on a plane, I do leg lifts. I raise one leg at a time, keeping my knees parallel, back nice and straight. I point and flex each foot, then rotate it clockwise and counterclockwise, three sets of ten with each leg. It's a small workout—quad, calf—and it keeps my core tight. If your core is tight, everything flows." —*Swin Cash*



## 1:00 P.M.

### Lunch—refresh your senses

"Eat something bright and juicy. For me that would be a salad with arugula, avocado, and beets with a little torn mint and a citrus vinaigrette, which doesn't have to be more than olive oil and fresh orange. Pasta or a sandwich can make you feel weighed down. also think it's important to surround yourself with beautiful things. Instead of eating out of plastic, keep a wood salad bowl and real fork in your desk." —*Suzanne Goin, owner of Los Angeles restaurants Lucques and A.O.C. and coauthor of Sunday Suppers at Lucques*

"I'm a huge fan of water. I sometimes feel like a plant that's started to wither, then literally comes back to life with water. The other miracle is a mixture of kale, collards, and mustard greens, steamed or boiled with garlic, dill, and caramelized onions. When you eat them (a cup at least twice a day), you feel zesty instead of dragging—and I swear my skin is like silk. And when a woman is feeling good about her body, others can feel it—she has a sensual presence." —*Renee Robinson, dancer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for 25 years*

## 2:15 P.M.

### Don't wait to inhale.

"I put a little drop of comforting scent on my leather watchband, and I smell it over the course of a day. It reconnects me with myself." —*Robin Coe-Hutshing*

## 4:00 P.M.

### Get up from your desk.

"Rather than e-mailing or phoning people at work, I walk over to their desks. Plus I always take the stairs." —*Jan Palchikoff*

## End of day...

### When you head out, instead of rushing straight home, give your body and mind a little time to regroup.

"After I leave work, I take a ten- to 30-minute walk to clear my thinking and help me wind down. I especially love to walk through a park—the beauty of the outdoors is always a welcome wake-up from being inside all day." —*Lesley Powell*