Computers

Posture Advice For Comfort & Health

WODEN CHIROPRACTIC

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One common preventable cause of spinal injury is bad posture, especially in those who work with computers.

Sitting is in fact tiring - placing pressure on the low back discs and making muscles work to keep our back and neck upright.

When people tire, they slump and this causes tissue creep - where collagen fibres making up the inner fabric of ligaments and tendons become stretched and deformed. These fibres have difficulty returning to their normal length, much like stretched plastic. Tissue creep happens after long or repeated loading - sometimes creep can start after as little as 15 minutes of slouching!

Once enough fibres weaken the tissue begins to fail and tear causing spinal pain, headaches, sore shoulders and arms. Prevention is the key because there is usually no specific injury event. So if you have some early warning signs try getting a chiropractic check-up.
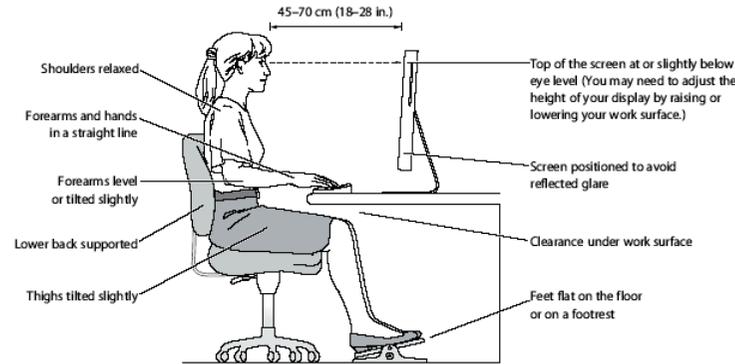
HARDWARE HINTS

Computer

- Position centre of monitor directly in front at nose level. Avoid glare on screen.

- Place document holder close to screen.

- Learn to touch type

- Place keyboard and mouse so arms hang naturally at side, elbows close to body.

Chair

- Adjust chair height and shape to suit the person.

- Place feet flat on the floor/footrest, knees approximately at hip level.

- Good lumbar support with adjustable seat angle (95 to 105 degrees)

- Try to keep your low back straight or slightly arched - prevents slumping.

PROTECTING YOUR SOFTWARE

Eyes

- Blink your eyes often and regularly alternate work tasks.

- Every 20 minutes focus on a distant object. Move eyes up, down, left, right and diagonals.

Hands & Wrists

- Spread your fingers apart. With arms straight gently bend your wrist and fingers up and back for 10 seconds and then down and forward.

Shoulders, Upper Back & neck

- Regularly stretch your arms out in front, overhead, to each side and behind your body.

- Roll shoulders gently forward and backwards.

- Gently look to each side. Tuck chin in, then raise chin up. Gently tilt ear to shoulder.

Low Back

- Gently side bend for 10 seconds, repeat both sides. Gently rotate trunk to each side for a 10 count.

- Regularly get up and move.

- Stand with hands supporting your low back and gently arch backwards. Repeat 2-3 times.

How Do I Sit Right?

There's two simple ways you can Sit Right.

1. Sit less

We can improve our health simply by standing up and moving around more.

For example the average 'standing' worker (eg. behind a counter) burns about 1,500 calories compared with a desk-bound office worker that might burn 1,000 calories.

*A. Why not **try standing whenever you're on the phone** as a way to break up your sitting time?*

*B. Consider **introducing 'walking meetings' into your workplace**. Try walking around the block instead of catching up with small groups in the Boardroom.*

C. Factor in a little of these two types of activity into your life every day...

2. Sit Correctly

FOLLOW THE SIT RIGHT CHECKLIST TO KEEP YOUR POSTURE CORRECT WHILE YOU SIT.

Your seat...

- Hips, elbows and knees should be at open angles (slightly more than 90 degrees).

- Recline slightly to ease lower back pressure.

- Thighs parallel to floor.

- Ensure feet are flat on floor (or use footrest).

- Sit about one arms-length from the monitor.

Your monitor...

- Position centre of screen at eye level – tilt the monitor upwards slightly.

Your mouse/keyboard...

- Keep wrists in neutral position, not bent up or down.
- Only use wrist rests while resting, not when typing.

Keep alphabetical section of keyboard centred to you.

SIT RIGHT CHECKLIST

Your seat...
- Hips, elbows and knees should be at open angles (slightly more than 90 degrees) [14]
- Recline slightly to ease lower back pressure [15]
- Thighs parallel to floor
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Your monitor...
- Position centre of screen at eye level – tilt the monitor upwards slightly

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And take regular breaks!

Sitting Facts

Sitting wrong affects your spinal health

Over HALF of your day is spent sitting

Your body will adapt to cater to what you do most often. When your body adapts to **constant sitting** it **makes you less skilled at** basic functions like **standing, walking, running and jumping**.

Sitting all day can result in **muscle stiffness, poor balance and mobility**, **as well as pain** in your lower back, neck and hip.

More than that, **when you sit for extended periods** in the wrong position (for example, with your back slumped at the computer) **this posture can stay with you even when you stand** or walk around.