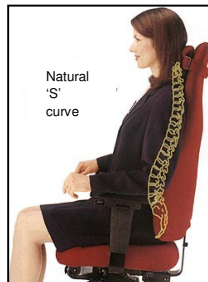




POSTURE

SITTING

Sitting correctly is very important as we spend many hours a day in this pattern. The back is shaped with a hollow in the lower section this is called a lordosis. This shape is created by the way each vertebrae sits on top of each other slightly at different angles. When most of us sit we generally have no back support and our back slouches automatically, this puts our backs into a leaning forward position (flexion). This pattern elicits pain more regularly. It is very important and necessary to have good sitting patterns to prevent injury and also to help with the recovery process after a back or neck injury.

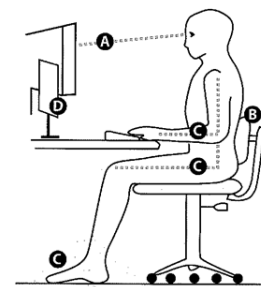


Don't Slump or Slouch

Keep your tailbone snug to the back of your chair, with your back against the back of the chair. Your knees should be hip height or slightly lower, the back of your chair should be at a 10° angle off centre, your chin should be tucked in not forward, your shoulders should be drawn down and together. Also where possible a tilted work area helps reduce slouching.

Do a small test - see why your back gets painful when you hang on your ligaments and don't sit correctly. Hold your finger and bend it backwards keep bending it until it hurts- now hold it in that end position- Hurts doesn't it? This might be one of the reasons why your back could hurt.

If you sit for long periods of time at work ensure that your work area is set up correctly. Here are some hints for you –



- A good quality chair which can be adjusted to suit you. Do not adjust your body to fit the chair! This should include seat height, back rest height and angle, and occasionally seat angle adjustment.
- The back rest should support the curve in your lower back. If it doesn't, get yourself a lumbar roll.
- Sit as far back in the chair as you possibly can.
- Your chair should be tucked in.
- Elbows, hips and knees should be bent at approximately 90 degrees.
- Your knees should be at hip height or slightly lower - a small wedge cushion should be used.
- Feet flat on the floor, or on a foot rest.
- Relax your shoulders and keep your head aligned over your spine. Forward head posture encourages neck and shoulder pain, tightness and headaches.
- Your computer monitor should be positioned at eye height or slightly lower. The screen should be free from glare and at approximately arms length, avoid using a monitor that is positioned of to the side.
- A document holder is better than reading from documents placed flat on the desk
- Take regular breaks from the computer, and vary time between keyboard and mouse tasks.

Observe Leg Crossing Patterns

When crossing your legs while you are seated be aware that if you always cross your legs in the same direction your lower back will start to curve sideways. Alternate the sides that you cross your legs.

Relax

Relaxing your neck and shoulders helps to prevent muscle tension – the shoulders should not be up around your ears!

Change Sitting Positions Often

Inactivity causes back pain, moving around continuously while you are sitting on your chair can help prevent muscle tension. (The use of a lumbar support including lumbar rolls and back supports help prevent the slump.)

If you are sitting for an extended period of time you may need a lumbar spine support, this will maintain your normal lumbar curve. Please ask your PhysioMaxx physiotherapist for advice, we have a range of different lumbar supports, your therapist will be able to decide what is best for you.