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Tips For Setting Up Your Home Office

PHYSIO DIRECT

Many of us spend more time at our desks than any other place. While the risk of injury while seated can seem very unlikely, spending hours in a poorly set up workspace can place vast amounts of pressure on your body and lead to overuse injuries. Below are a few tips that can help you set up your workstation correctly.

Your Chair

Starting with the height of your chair is the best place to begin. Ideally, your feet should be flat on the floor, and if you can adjust the height of the chair, your thighs should be parallel to the floor. If your chair has armrests, they should be low enough to allow your elbows to sit comfortably between 90-110 degrees and resting by the side of your body. A small cushion or rolled-up towel may be added to the back of the chair to add support to the lower back, and this can also help to prevent slouching.

If you are unable to adjust your chair and it is too high, you can use a footrest to allow them to rest comfortably.

Your Desk

The height of your desk should be set so that your arms can rest comfortably at the keyboard and hands, wrists and forearms can sit in a neutral position and parallel to the floor. Where possible, put everything you need within easy reach and alternate days using your mouse and phone with different hands-on different days.

Your Screen

The height of your computer should be raised so that the top of the screen is slightly below eye level. Allowing your neck to rest in a neutral position can help to prevent neck pain and headaches. Ideally, if you can set the screen to be 20-40 inches away from your face, this will reduce strain on your eyes while reading.

Some other tips

Being comfortable is extremely important for productivity and focus if you are struggling with pain; your work will often suffer. Even joint stiffness and muscle tightness can disrupt your workflow, and taking the time to adjust your workstation can save you countless hours in the long run and prevent painful overuse injuries.

Taking active breaks from sitting to move and stretch can help to maintain muscle and joint health, which can be compromised from being in the same posture too long. You can set a timer or make an active effort to take phone calls and meetings while standing.

Speak to your physiotherapist for personalized advice on your workplace setup.



Stretching Tips



Hold your stretches for at least 30 seconds to make a change to your tissues and try not to 'bounce' at the end of your range as this can cause an injury.



Brain Teasers

Solve these common word puzzles:

Injury + Insult

Mce mce mce

Daysallwork

Step pets pets



Acute Wry Neck

Have you ever woken up with an inexplicably stiff and painful neck that will only turn to one side? You might have been suffering from acute wry neck, a painful condition following a typical pattern of symptoms. In the clinic, wry neck is classified as one of two different types – Facet or Discogenic wry neck.

Facet Wry Neck:

Facet joints are found on either side of the spine and allow controlled rotation and side bending of the neck. An awkward or sudden movement of the neck can cause a part of the joint capsule to tear or get caught in the joint, making it feel locked. The muscles around the area can also become tight and spasm, which amplifies the pain. The pain is usually sharp and can be pinpointed quite accurately to the part of the neck causing the problem, and the pain rarely travels down into the arm. It is usually possible to find a resting position where the pain goes away completely, only having pain when turning in specific directions. The good news about Facet Wry Neck is

that your physiotherapist is usually able to help you 'unlock' the neck quite quickly with gentle mobilisations. Most of the time, a full recovery can be expected within a week.

Discogenic Wry Neck:

The vertebrae of the neck are separated from each other by fibrous discs, filled with a gelatinous centre. These discs provide support, flexibility and shock absorption. When placed under pressure, these discs may bulge or tear, and the resulting swelling can cause pain and muscle spasm in the surrounding area. It is important to note that in an area as sensitive as the neck, a small amount of damage can result in a large amount of pain.

The development of discogenic wry neck is usually due to a combination of factors, including neck stiffness, poor posture and biomechanics that can contribute to the disc being vulnerable prior to the injury. In this case, it can be challenging to find a comfortable position, and it is more likely for the pain to travel into the arm and include pins and needles.

Treatment of discogenic wry neck is focused on reducing pain and muscle spasm with massage, taping, heat and postural education. Further treatment aims to reduce any stress that is being placed on the disc, mobilise any stiff spinal segments and correct any muscle imbalances. While the initial symptoms may settle down quite quickly, it can take up to six weeks to fully recover from discogenic wry neck. In this condition, it is also essential to address all the factors that may cause a recurrence of the issue.

The information in this newsletter is not a replacement for proper medical advice. Always see a medical professional for an assessment of your condition.



Answers: 1. Add insult to injury 2. Three blind mice 3. All in a days work 4. One step forward, two steps backwards.



Vegan Red Cabbage and Carrot Patties

1. Bring a medium sized frying pan to medium heat, add 1 Tbsp. olive oil, salt and pepper, onion and garlic. Cook until onions and garlic are soft. Lower heat and cover.
2. In a separate bowl, finely grate carrot and slice cabbage, dice coriander and mix thoroughly.
3. Add chia seeds to a small glass with water and leave to thicken.
4. Add cooked onion and garlic to carrot and cabbage and mix thoroughly. Add flour, turmeric, chia seeds and coriander and knead until a dough of even consistency is formed.
5. Shape mixture into small patties and pan fry on medium heat with 2 Tbsp. Olive Oil. Drain excess oil with paper towel and serve immediately.

Ingredients

½ Small Red Cabbage
2 Large Carrots
½ Spanish Onion, diced
1 tsp. Chia Seeds
4 Tbsp. Water
½ Cup Flour
3 Tbsp. Olive Oil
2 Garlic Cloves, diced
1 tsp. Turmeric
1 Tbsp. Fresh Coriander
Salt and Pepper

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