



Stay Healthy at Work

The purpose of this booklet is to give you some advice regarding staying healthy at work. It includes advice about risk factors for ill health, how to help yourself, and working at a desk.

Inspected and rated

Good



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Risk Factors for Ill Health

It is important to be aware of things which may contribute to ill health, both at work and at home. Several common risk factors are:

- ! Spending a long time in the same position
- ! Spending a long time in an awkward position
- ! Repetition of movements / tasks
- ! Manual handling including lifting or moving objects
- ! Feeling stressed, worried or frustrated

As many people spend a large proportion of their time at work, it is important to consider how these factors present themselves in the workplace and what you can do to help address them.

Risk Factors for Ill Health

Consider **Active Travel**:

- Get off the bus/train one stop earlier and walk the rest of the way
- Park your car further away than usual
- Consider cycling to work
- Take the stairs, instead of lifts

At Work:

- Rotate your tasks
- Change position regularly
- Maintain good posture
- Complete a work station assessment
- Good manual handling techniques
- Try to get fresh air every day
 - go for a walk at lunch

During Daily Life:

- Drink plenty of water
- Eat a balanced diet
- Find a way to manage stress
- Avoid staying in the same, or awkward, positions for too long
- Regular exercise

Ensure you do

Regular Physical Activity:

- Find an activity which you enjoy!
- Aim to do an activity which gets you slightly out of breath for 30 minutes, 5 times a week.
- You can break this into smaller chunks during the day if this is more manageable

Working at a Desk



Complete a work station assessment.

At a minimum, ensure that:

- ✓ The screen is at arm's length
- ✓ The top of the screen is at eye level
- ✓ Your hips are slightly higher than your knees
- ✓ Your backrest is set so that your back leans comfortably against it
- ✓ Your feet are flat on the floor (or on a footrest)
- ✓ Your elbows are at 90 degrees
- ✓ Your forearms are rested lightly on the desk
- ✓ The mouse is within easy reach

You may also want to consider the use of equipment such as: lumbar support, wrist support for mouse mat/keyboard, alternative style of mouse, or a headset (if you are on the telephone a lot).

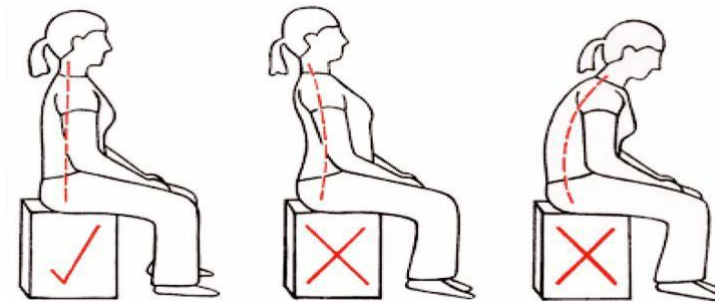
Key Tips:

1. Change position regularly – aim to stretch / move every 30 minutes
2. Rotate tasks – avoid doing the same task for too long continuously as this can cause repetitive strain injuries
3. Stretch regularly
4. Go for a short walk during breaks
5. Use the stairs at work
6. Exercise at work – get your colleagues involved!

If you continue to get problems after trying this advice for a few weeks, you may want to ask your manager if you can have an assessment of your work station.

Posture

There is not a 'one size fits all' approach to posture. What is comfortable for one person may not be comfortable for another. The most important thing is to make sure that you are changing position and moving regularly during the day. Bodies do not like staying in the same position for a long time, no matter what that position is.



As an aim: **try to change position every 20-30 minutes**. This may just involve doing a couple of quick stretches.

Key Tips: Things to Consider

1. Break up your tasks: instead of doing the same activity for a couple of hours, mix your activities up so that you are not repeating the same movements or staying in the same position for too long
2. Go for regular short walks, even if this is only to the printer or to get a drink
3. Stretch regularly – find stretches that help you and do these little & often throughout the day
4. Avoid being in awkward postures e.g. twisted to the side
5. Avoid holding the phone between your ear and shoulder – consider use of a headset if you are on the phone a lot
6. Ensure you are using correct manual handling techniques when lifting or moving object
7. Make sure that your workstation is set up for you
8. Use the stairs instead of the lift
9. Take breaks if you drive long distances - the Highway Code recommends that drivers should take at least a 15 minute break every 2 hours.

If you are unsure whether your workstation is set up correctly for you or you continue to get pain, you may wish to consider asking your manager for an ergonomics assessment.

Exercise at Work

N.B. You do not need to do all of these exercises. Find the ones that seem to help you, and focus on these. You may need to adjust the number of repetitions to suit you.

1. Chair Exercises – aim to do hourly



Tilt your head slowly up and down.
X 3



Tilt your head slowly side to side.
X 3 each side



Turn your head slowly side to side.
X 3 each side



Slide your chin backwards.
X 5



Slowly roll your shoulders backwards.
X 5



Turn in your chair.
Hold 3 secs.
Repeat to the other side



Bring your elbows back.
Hold 20 secs



Pull your hands away from your body.
Hold 20 secs



Lean forwards until you feel a stretch in the back of your leg.
Hold 20 secs
Repeat with the other leg.

2. Standing Exercises – do little & often



Do small circles with your hips, in both directions.
X 3 each direction



Keep your feet flat on the floor and lean forwards slowly until you feel a stretch in your calf. Hold 20 secs.

Repeat with the other leg



Lean over to the side. Hold for 5 secs or 3 slow breaths.

Repeat to the other side



Push up on your toes X 10



Wall push ups
X 10

For more information

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