**No More Slouching! Here are 7 Tips for Better Posture While You Work**

Chances are, you’re probably slouching right now as you read this. From your office cubical to lounging at home, everyday life makes it difficult to maintain proper posture. But it’s important to understand that poor posture is more than just a “cosmetic” issue. It can have some serious health consequences.

Slouching for hours each day can lead to soreness and pain, poor circulation, fatigue, poor digestion, and even arthritis. Even more surprising, poor posture can lead to mental side effects as well. A 2012 [study](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2228003/Sit-cheer-Slouching-making-sad-study-shows.html) found that a “slouched or despondent body posture can lead to decreased energy and feelings of depression”. Yup, that’s right, slouching can make you sad.

Maintaining proper posture throughout the workday might sound like a lot of work, but the benefits make the extra effort completely worthwhile. According to the [American Chiropractic Association](https://acatoday.org/content/posture-power-how-to-correct-your-body-alignment) (ACA), correct posture:

* Helps keep bones and joints in correct alignment so that muscles are used correctly, decreasing the risk of arthritis and joint pain.
* Reduces the stress on the ligaments holding the spinal joints together, minimizing the likelihood of injury.
* Allows muscles to work more efficiently, allowing the body to use less energy, which prevents muscle fatigue.
* Helps prevent muscle strain, overuse disorders, and even back and muscular pain.

So, if you feel achy and sore after a long day at work, try out some of the following tips for better posture at your desk:

**Keep your ears in line with your shoulders.** Pull your head back to align your ears with your shoulders. If you find yourself leaning too far forward or backward, you’re not maintaining good posture. Aligning your ears with your shoulders will keep your body aligned while sitting at your desk.

**Replace your chair with an exercise ball.** While your office chair might seem like a more comfortable option, sitting on an exercise ball will force you to practice proper posture. Exercise balls make it more difficult to slouch, while also stimulating different muscles throughout your body. Try swapping out your chair for an exercise ball for a few hours each day. You’ll even burn some extra calories, too!

**Uncross your legs.** Many of us are guilty of sitting with our legs crossed – especially women. While it can feel like a natural, comfortable position, it’s actually terrible for your posture and circulation. For proper posture, your feet should be kept flat on the floor. If you’re having trouble breaking the [bad habit](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/9-bad-habits-you-need-to-break-asap-for-a-healthier-life), try propping your feet up on a small cardboard box or a stack of books.

**Deskercise.** Getting in an afternoon deskercise session has many perks. You’ll burn calories, reduce stress, and help your body recover from any accidental slouching throughout the day. Many deskercises can be done while sitting in your chair. Check out this [blog post](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/bid/344319/8-exercises-you-can-do-discreetly-at-your-desk-0) for some deskercise inspiration.

**Stand more.** Standing desks are an excellent way to battle poor posture. When you’re having trouble fighting the urge to slouch in your seat, get up and stand! Standing will help boost circulation and keep you active. If your company doesn’t offer standing desks to every employee, you can easily [make one yourself](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/make-your-own-standing-desk)!

**Stretch regularly.** Incorporate some light stretches into your daily work routine. These stretches don’t need to be intense by any means (as that could lead to injury), but just enough to get your blood flowing. There are certain stretches designed specifically for a work environment that can be done discretely at your desk. Check out this [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWmMYEKVMo8) for some examples.

**Move more.** Take walking breaks throughout the day to stretch and put your muscles to use. It’s recommended to get up and move away from your desk once every hour of the workday. Try to also use the stairs as much as possible to work even more muscles. Getting active will provide you an instant [energy boost](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/sneaky-ways-to-feel-energized-all-day-long) that will make it easier to maintain proper posture once you get back to your desk.

Slouching throughout the workday is a bad habit that can easily be changed with some mindfulness and practice. Straighten up while you work with these tips that will keep you feeling (and looking!) your best all day long.