CREATING HEALTHY WORK SPACES AND HABITS

Working from home is now a reality. Even as we return to work, remote working is here to stay! To make it work it is key to adjust to our new environments.

Sitting for a prolonged period is not great for our posture and as a result unwanted neck, shoulder, and lower back pain is common. It is really important to take steps to keep yourself healthy and reduce risks from display screen work. Check out our recommendations:

Healthy Work Space - The Basics

a. Seated Desk Posture

- Try to keep your feet flat on the ground

- Bend your knees at about a 90 degrees angle

- Keep your back supported & straight with your head looking forward

- The top of your screen should ideally be in line with your eyes, not higher. Slide some books under your screen if it is to low

- You can find more information on the NHS site here.

b. Standing Desk Posture

- Alternate between sitting-standing if you can. This will help with good posture, burn more calories and boost your productivity

- Slide a box under your laptop or monitor and work standing up for a little while

- It's also a great way to move more

- You can find more information on the HSE Site Here.

c. Add Some Imagination

- If you have one, sit on a stability ball. It will not only help with your posture but also improve your core strength

- Place a cushion behind your back on the chair when sitting down – this should help to prevent back pain

- Avoid eye fatigue by changing focus on blinking from time to time.

d. Choose a Dedicated Work Space

- Setting yourself up at a table, even if it's in your kitchen or living room is the best option when working from home

- Studies show that sofas, beds or other non-traditional work-settings can negatively affect your posture

- Plus, separating spaces means when you come to relax in the evening, you have somewhere different to go to.

Healthy Habits - The Basics

Take clear breaks, step away from your desk! Breaks like eating lunch, stretching, or moving around will recharge you and also reduce risks linked to prolonged sitting.

a. Move More

- Moving is the best thing you can do for your posture

- Set a timer to get up and move every hour (at least 5 mins every hour). Why not try one of the many Apps available like Stand Up

- Do more steps at lunch time. Exercise frequently to include extra movement in your day (aim for 7,000 - 12,500 steps a day if you can).

b. Stretch it Out

- Sitting for a long period in one place can cause some muscles to tighten up

- Stretch every day for at least 10 minutes to help prevent cramps, aches, and pain later

- Check out our six simple core exercises, to help reduce injury risk and help your posture.

Source: Various (Vitality/HSE/NHS/CIPD)