



Helpful tips for desk-based & vehicle workers

Prolonged sitting activity can contribute to muscular stiffness along with joint aches and pains. Many adults in the UK spend more than seven hours a day sitting or lying, and this typically increases with age to 10 hours or more.

Here are some simple techniques that you can follow to reduce these issues:

- Take micro-breaks (2-3 minutes) every hour to stretch and alter your position
- Sedentary workers are advised to spend at least 2 hours standing continually through the working day
 - Ensure you are adopting good sitting postures
 - Perform these head-toe exercises throughout your working day

NECK STRETCHES

Sit tall and comfortably in a chair

- Clasp hands behind head and slowly pull head down and chin towards your chest.
- Hold position for up to 30 seconds, feeling a stretch in the neck and upper back and then repeat.

Sit tall and comfortably in a chair

- Hold bottom of the seat with the hand on the side to be stretched
- to lower the shoulder by pulling down.
- Tilt and turn head to the opposite side.
- Nod head forward until a stretch is felt alongside and back of neck.
- Hold the stretch for up to 30 seconds and apply extra pressure (gently) with the hand to increase the stretch if needed. Repeat stretch on both sides.

Sit tall whilst focusing on an object at eye level

- Slowly move your head back over your shoulder and tuck your chin in.
- Guide the movement with your hand on your chin, hold for 10 seconds, return to initial position and repeat 5 times

UPPER BACK, SHOULDER & ARM STRETCHES

Perform stretch in sitting or standing with knees slightly bent

- Extend one arm out in front with the elbow straight.
- Use the other hand to grasp it at the side of the thumb and bend the wrist downward.
- Turn wrist towards the small finger to increase the stretch.
- Hold for up to 30 seconds and repeat on both arms.

Perform stretch in sitting or standing with knees slightly bent

- Tuck in chin and place hands behind your head, fingers interlaced.
- Push with head backward against hands and hold for up to 30 seconds and repeat.

Perform stretch in sitting or standing with knees slightly bent

- Use one hand to spread apart and straighten the fingers of the other hand and then stretch wrist back gently as far as you can.
- Apply the pressure through the tips of the fingers and be sure to include the thumb. Do not apply pressure to the palm of the hand, aim to hold for up to 30 seconds and repeat on both arms.

Perform stretch while sitting with arms relaxed by your side

- Rotate your arms so your thumbs are pointing backward to open the chest.
- Squeeze the shoulder blades together, keep your chin tucked and hold this position for 30 seconds and repeat.

Perform stretch either sitting or standing

- Bring one arm across your body at chest height.
- Use the opposite arm to lightly push on your elbow to accentuate the stretch., do not rotate your trunk.
- Hold this position for 30 seconds and repeat on both arms.

Sit tall and cross your arms on your chest

- Slowly look up towards the ceiling by raising your elbows and hold this position of 30 seconds.
- Slowly return to the neutral position and repeat



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LOWER BACK STRETCHES

- Sit in a chair with your hands on your hips and rotate the trunk
- Keep the trunk vertical through rotation.
 - Hold for up to 30 seconds and repeat on both sides. Sit up straight and place your palms on your lower back
 - With your fingers pointing down to the floor, bring your thumbs almost around the hip bones and keep your torso erect.
 - Try to touch your elbows together behind your back whilst keeping your chin level, and upper body relaxed. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat. Sit up straight in a chair and look directly ahead of you
 - Lift one arm up and above your head and slowly bend sideways while reaching down with the opposite hand, until you feel a stretch at the side of your trunk (if height is restricted place hand on opposite shoulder). Do not twist or lean forward.
 - Hold the stretch for 30 seconds and repeat on opposite side. Sit on a chair with your thighs parallel to the ground
 - Keep your feet flat on the floor and your back in a neutral position (slightly arched).
 - Maintain a steady abdominal breathing while tilting your hips posteriorly by rounding your lower back and anteriorly by arching your lower back.
 - Alternate between these motions, working through all the available range of motion

LEG & ANKLE STRETCHES

- Sit on the edge of a sturdy chair with one leg straight in front and the other knee bent
- Stick your hips back, keeping your back straight, as you bend forward to feel a stretch behind your straight leg.
 - Hold the position for 30 seconds and repeat on the opposite leg. Sit on a straight chair with your feet flat on the floor
 - Move one foot backward under the chair as much as possible, keeping your heel and toes on the floor.
 - Hold up to 30 seconds and repeat on the opposite leg. Sit straight on a chair, rest your foot on the ground with the ball of your foot then rotate your ankle

These exercises can be performed whilst in your vehicle, working at your desk or even whilst sitting at home. Complete these throughout your day and start to see the benefits within 3-4 weeks

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