



PARTNER UPDATE

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WORK PARTNERS OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS

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April 2018

Sedentary Workstations and Back Pain

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A weekend of binge watching a Netflix series plus an all week desk job may not seem physically taxing, but research shows prolonged sitting causes musculoskeletal pain plus an increased incidence of diabetes, increased blood pressure and heart disease. Research has shown that a sitting posture burns fewer calories which may also lead to weight gain and obesity. Those of us who spend prolonged periods at our workstations should be practicing proper sitting posture as demonstrated in the illustration below. There are many things to consider when seated for prolonged periods of time.

Poor sitting posture can strain your neck and back and cause headaches and other complications. Our average adult head weighs 10 - 12 pounds. When you tilt your head forward and down to look at your phone you are putting a jaw dropping 60 extra pounds of weight on your neck. After hours of keeping your head in this position it will cause pain, tightness and discomfort in your neck and more than likely your shoulders and upper back. This can also cause headaches plus additional pain all over your body including into your hands and feet. OUCH!

Proper sitting posture demonstrated in the slide below:

- 9 The top of your monitor should be slightly below eye level.
- 9 Arms should be relaxed at sides with upper arms and lower arms at a 90 degree angle. Wrists straight with fingers relaxed.
- 9 Upper back straight, with head stacked over trunk and shoulders rolled back and relaxed.
- 9 Chair backrest supporting the natural lordotic curve of your lumbar spine.
- 9 Hips back against the back of chair.
- J Adjust seat height so knees are below or slightly inferior to hips and knee is bent at a 90 to 110 degree angle.
- 9 Feet flat on floor or resting on a footrest.





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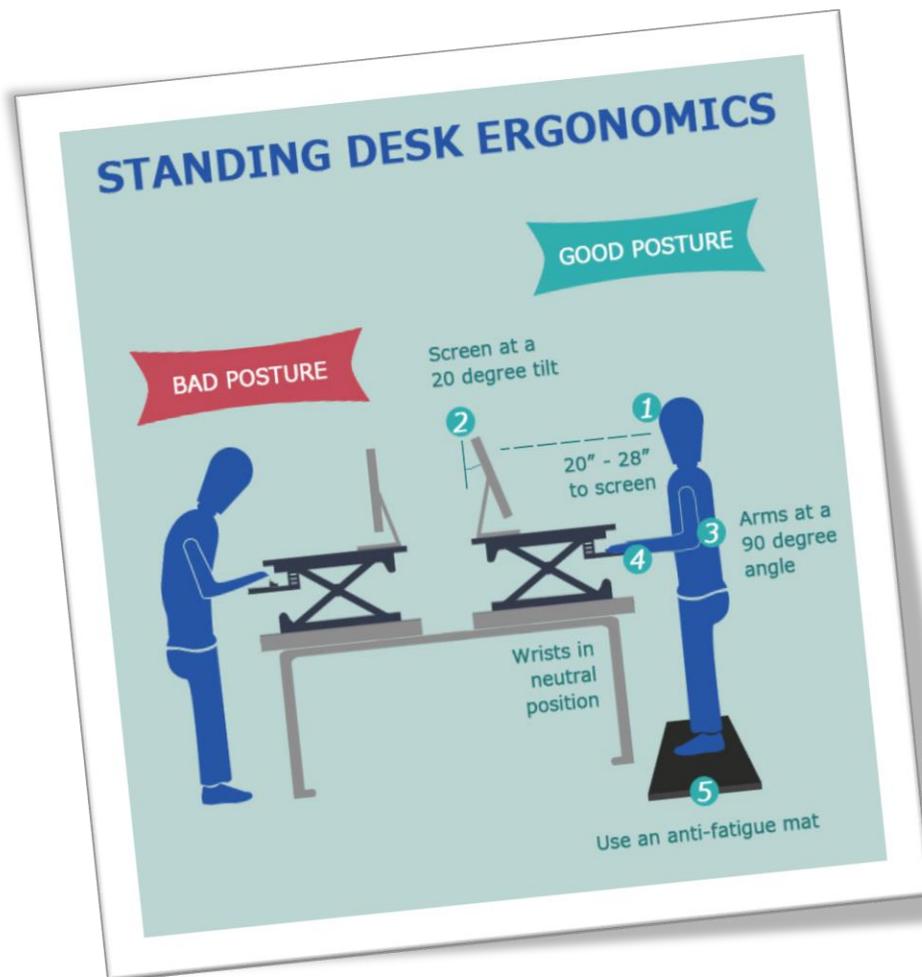
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Do not sit in the same position for long periods of time. If any of the chairs you use do not offer a good lumbar support then I recommend using a small pillow or rolled up towel just above your hips between you and your chair. This position will give your spine a slight healthy, happy, and natural lordotic curve.

We were not meant to sit all day. Our bodies are dynamic. I recommend changing postures regularly as this will help combat musculoskeletal fatigue and pain, along with elevating your mood and energy levels. A sit stand desk can help achieve this.

Proper standing desk posture as demonstrated below.

- ✓ Monitor at a 20 degree tilt angle, approximately 20" - 28" away from your face.
- ✓ Arms at a 90 degree angle with your wrists in a neutral position and fingers and shoulders are relaxed.
- ✓ Use an anti-fatigue mat.



(Continued Page 3)



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However, prolonged standing is not ideal either.

The process of standing up does not prevent all of the issues that can develop from extended periods of sitting. I recommend an 80/20 ratio of standing to sitting. A good general rule is to switch to standing every 20 minutes and sit when you feel tired. Or if you prefer sitting to standing please get up and move around every 20 minutes.

Ideally, you want to keep moving. Following these recommendations encourages a movement based lifestyle:

When you're at work, there are a lot of things you can do to keep moving:

- ✓ Drink a lot of water. Besides being a good habit, it will make you get up and walk to the bathroom often. Use a bathroom that's further away if possible.
- ✓ Go to a colleague's desk if you have a question as opposed to sending them an email.
- ✓ Have standing or walking meetings.
- ✓ Set an alarm on your phone or computer to stand or move every 20 minutes.
- ✓ Park further from the entrance.
- ✓ Take the stairs instead of the elevator.

Remember: Motion is lotion for your joints!

About Dr. Jill Chapman | Chiropractor | WorkPartners Occupational Health Specialists

Dr. Jill Chapman graduated with her BA in Liberal Studies from California State University, Fresno. A motor vehicle accident shortly after graduation lead her to seek chiropractic care, changing her career goals and lead her back to college to obtain her pre medical requirements. She then attended Palmer Chiropractic College, West where she graduated with her Doctorate of Chiropractic in 2000. Dr. Chapman has a background in occupational health and family care. The majority of her career has been spent in multidisciplinary clinical settings working along side physicians, physical therapists and acupuncturists. Dr. Chapman is a certified Department of Transportation (DOT) Medical Examiner as well as a certified Radiology X-Ray Supervisor and Operator. She is a California native and has been living in Southern California for the past 18 years.

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Located in North San Diego County, WorkPartners clinics are full service Occupational Health clinics dedicated to supporting the health and wellness of local employees. Learn more at www.WorkPartnersOHS.com.