

A T O Z P H Y S I O T H E R A P Y

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POSITIVE DESK HABITS



"THE ONLY BAD
POSTURE IS THE ONE
YOU SPEND TOO MUCH
TIME IN"



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- ***Print your PDF copy to put next to your desk!***



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A background image of a modern, minimalist desk and chair. The desk is white with a light-colored wooden top. A white ergonomic chair is positioned in front of it. On the desk, there is a small potted plant in a light-colored pot. The background is a bright, clean white wall.

"Your best
posture is your
next posture"
- Morgan Freeman

Setting up your work desk

There is no such thing as bad posture - but sitting in postures for too long can cause increased muscle tension, joint stiffness, pain and fatigue.



Here's a few tips to improve your desk set up:

- Allow your back to rest completely against the back of the chair with your bottom far back (you may need a pillow/cushion lengthwise behind your back or a small rolled towel in the curve of your lower back for support)
- Knees bent at 90deg (right angles to the ground)
- Feet flat on the floor (or supported on a step/box or books)
- Computer monitor at eye level so gaze is centred on screen
- Elbows held at right angles to your arm (you may need a rolled towel/support under your forearms if desk is too low)
- Shoulders are not elevated or dropped down too low - we don't want to create extra tension in neck and shoulders

Create a space that inspires you! Ensure you can find everything you need at your fingertips, lift the mood with some natural light and plants, or personalise it with a few of your favorite photos or stationary items.

Always remember that the aim is to work smarter not harder.

An energy efficient posture should be EASY and EFFORTLESS.

Better posture = movement

Take a moment every 20-30mins to stretch, move and groove to reduce the buildup of muscle tension and stiffness.



Simple ways you can incorporate movement in your day:

- Scheduling drink breaks for water and coffee/tea = move and hydrate.
- Going on bathroom breaks
- Stepping away from the office / desk for your lunch breaks. Maybe sit outside, stand at the bench or sit on the floor - change up your position from chair sitting.
- Set up the printer away from your desk so you have to get up
- Decide on a movement that is associated with a task, such as:
 - Neck movements - turn side to side 3x and look up and down 3x every time you move onto a new task, document or project file.
 - Shoulder rolls - 3x forward and 3x back every time you check your email.
 - Stand up and march on the spot for 30sec every time the phone rings.
 - Do 5x sit to stands from your chair when you check social media.

MOVEMENT IS KEY! The more we move our bodies, the better we will be in the long run. The more variability in movement, the better!

"A good stance
and posture
reflect a proper
state of mind"
- Morihei Ueshiba

Desk Stretches

These stretches aim to open the spine in all directions as well as the hips, arms and pelvis. They are best performed with our breath - to expand the rib cage in all directions (front, sides and back) as we breathe in. This way, you are increasing your mobility, lung capacity, oxygen levels to your brain and tissues, and also relaxes your body. Start with 5x breath cycles each side for each stretch - increase to 10-15x breath cycles for deeper relaxation and mobility. You may choose to do them in a sequence or spread them throughout the day as your 20-30min movement break.



CAT - COW

Start with your hands on your knees. On your inhale, lift your chest up and forward and extend your spine from tailbone to head. On your exhale, tuck your chin to your chest and curl your spine.

UPPER BACK TWIST

On your inhale, reach hands up high and grow tall. On your exhale, bring one hand to the opposite knee and the other to the back of your chair and twist. Repeat on the other side.

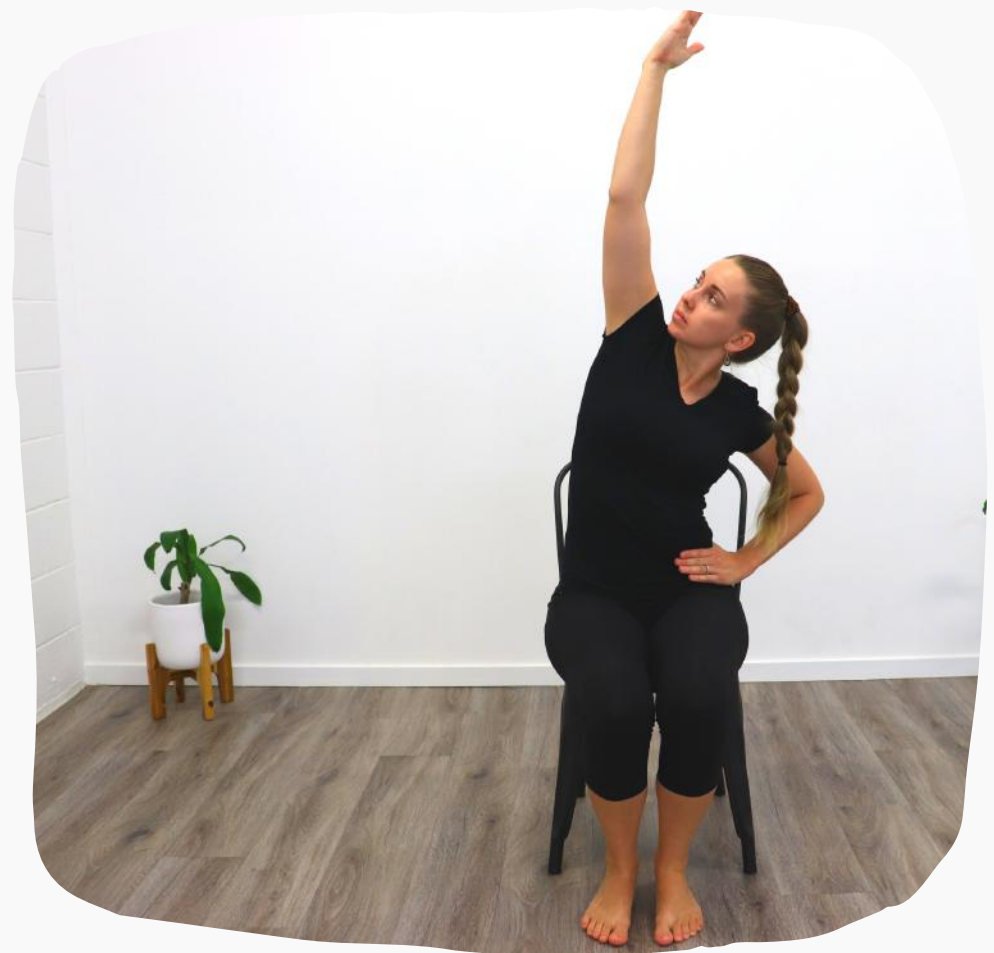


Never slouch, as doing so compresses the lungs, overcrowds other vital organs, rounds the back and throws you off balance."
- Joseph H. Pilates

Desk Stretches

SIDE BEND AND REACH

Keep your sit bones and buttocks on the chair as you reach your hand up and over on the inhale. Breathe into the side body to feel a stretch from armpit to hip and breathe out to fold into side stretch.



HIP OPENER AND GLUTE STRETCH

Keep your sit bones in contact with the chair and your spine long and tall. Cross left ankle over right knee and gently use your left hand to push down on your left knee to open hip and feel buttock stretch. To increase stretch, lean forward from the hips. Repeat other side.



HAMSTRING STRETCH

Keep sit bones in contact with edge of chair and spine long and tall. Bend forward from the hips to feel stretch in back of thigh (straight leg in front). Option for foot extended or relaxed.



"Freedom in a posture is when every joint is active"
- Bks Iyengar

Desk Stretches

FORWARD PRAYER

Keep a slight engagement of the core to keep the spine and lower back long and bend from the hips. Keep elbows on a surface in front of you (desk/chair) as you turn your palms up and reach for your shoulder blades and open the shoulders and chest.



KNEELING HIP OPENER AND CACTUS ARMS

Place one foot behind you so that you come into a kneeling lunge position (place a towel/cushion under your back knee for support). Tuck your tailbone and gently activate your buttocks to open the front of your hip (back leg). Keep your front knee over your ankle, not leaning forward.

Take your hands up to form a 'stop sign' with elbows in line with shoulders and palms facing forwards. Open your collar bones to feel a stretch in your chest and arms. Gently draw the shoulder blades towards each other.



"If you stretch correctly and regularly, you will find that every movement you make becomes easier."

- Bob Anderson

Your Stretches for Positive Desk Habits



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