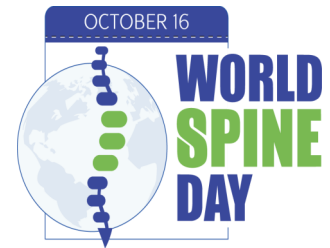


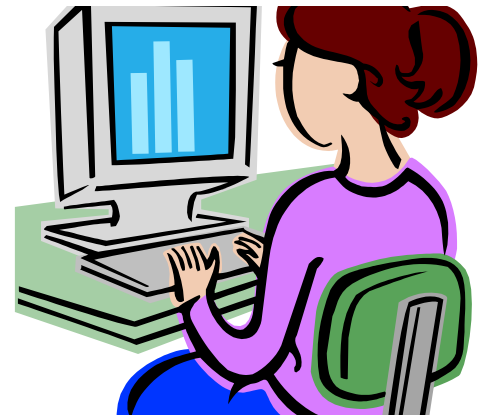
Your Back at Work

Sedentary Workers



Taking care of your spine at work

- Sitting for extended periods of time can stress your spine, including your back and neck -> changing positions every 30-60min can be helpful (ex. stand, , take a short walk to wash-room/filing cabinet, stretch)
- Position of your body in relation to your work (ex. workstation including desk, computer, phone) can cause strain on your body-> ensure that you sit directly in front of your work, feet flat on the floor and with items that you use most often close by
- Try to use a supportive chair that you can adjust for your size and if that is not possible then try to roll a small towel/blanket and place between the curve of your lower back; if your feet do not reach the floor then place a box or other item to use as a footrest
- Position your work directly in front of you whenever possible in order to avoid looking up/down or twisting to either side
- If using a telephone, do not hold it between ear and shoulder, rather hold it with your hand or use a hands-free set if that is an option
- Use the World Spine Day “Straighten Up and Move” exercises to help combat poor posture and give your spine a break; try to change position at least once an hour!



Did you know?

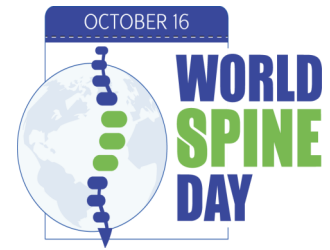
- Back and neck pain is one of the most common reasons for work-place sick leave.
- Up to 80% of people will suffer from back or neck pain during their lives.
- 50% of the working population will experience back or neck pain symptoms at least once per year.
- Age is one of the most common risk factors for spinal pain, and the greatest effects of population ageing are predicted in low- and middle-income countries.



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General Tips for a Healthy Spine

- **Sleep-** sleeping on your back or stomach can put additional strain on your back and neck; when sleeping on your back place a pillow under your knees and when on your side place a pillow between your knees
- **Healthy Diet and Exercise-** extra body weight can cause additional strain on your spine; try to stay within 10lbs of your ideal weight by eating a healthy, well-balanced diet and exercising regularly
- **Stop Smoking-** smokers have more back pain because chemicals in tobacco can reduce circulation and delay healing
- **Straighten Up and Move-** become more aware of your posture, take regular breaks to change positions and try the “Straighten Up and Move” exercises series to reduce strain on your spine
- **Consult a registered health care professional-** in your community to discuss these and other strategies to prevent and manage spinal disorders; spine experts may include chiropractors, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, nurses and medical doctors

When to seek help:

It is important to seek help as soon as you notice that something seems changed or different. Experts can help you to identify the source of the problem and provide treatment and advice for prevention and management.

If you experience any of the following then you should consider seeking immediate attention:

- Loss of bowel/bladder function
- Pain accompanied by dizziness, double vision, difficulty speaking or swallowing, difficulty walking or nausea
- After a trauma such as an accident, slip/fall, motor vehicle accident
- Loss of coordination and or clumsiness in extremities
- Pain that is severe, constant, getting worse or does not improve
- Pain that is worse at night and/or accompanied by night sweats
- Pain/numbness/tingling that goes into the arm or down the leg