



Looking after your back

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Your spine is one of the hardest working structures in your body. It holds you upright, protects your spinal cord, absorbs shock as you move, and gives you the flexibility to bend, twist, and reach.

The fix isn't holding the perfect posture all day whilst sitting at your desk, it's understanding that your spine is designed to move and providing it with the strength it needs.

The purpose of your spine

The spine has three main curves, each with a different job;

- **Cervical spine (neck)** – supporting your head and allows range of motion to look around.
- **Thoracic spine (upper/mid back)** – attaches to your ribcage and allows rotation.
- **Lumbar spine (lower back)** – bearing most of your body's load and allows bending.

Between each vertebrae sits discs, acting as a cushion that absorbs shock and allows the whole column to flex, extend and rotate. The s-curve shape isn't accidental,

it distributes load evenly and gives your spine more resistance.

How your spine works with your core

Your core isn't just 'abs', it's a group of deep muscles that support the spine and provides stability. Think of your spine as a flagpole and your core muscles are like the wires holding it steady. Without strong, engaged core muscles, your spine has to work harder to support everyday movement, which increases wear on the discs and joints over time.

Achievable habits for a 'deskie'

- **Change position**, don't fix one. Take frequent breaks to move around as much as you can. Try not to remain in a single fixed position for more than 30 minutes. Alternate sitting and standing.
- **Stretch it out.** Perform stretches targeting the neck, shoulders, back, and hips to release tension and improve mobility. Yes, these can all be done seated!
- **Build a simple core routine.** Planks, bird-dogs, dead bugs or seated core braces done daily build the stability your spine relies on.

- **Carry smart.** Use a bag with two straps instead of a heavy one-sided laptop bag.

Know the risks of sedentary behaviours

Poor posture can lead to development of upper and lower cross syndrome – muscular imbalances that, if left to deteriorate, can cause lower back pain. Upper cross is caused by prolonged periods of slouching and can lead to upper back pain and headaches. Lower cross is caused by tilting of the pelvis, tightness in hips and can result in lower back pain and poor core strength.

By incorporating these tips into your daily routine, you can maintain good posture and avoid the common aches and pains associated with sedentary working.

Contact one of our Wellness Coaches for more further support on looking after your back or how about checking in with your posture with our 3D Body Scan!

Your spine wants to move and your muscles want to work. Give it both. Support your spine and it will support you!