**In Good Hands Chiropractic Blog: Desk Posture**

**Stuck Behind a Desk All Day? Here’s How You Can Reduce Stress on Your Body.**

Lying down on your back puts the least amount of pressure on your spine. By relieving tension, you allow the vertebrae to hydrate and pull nutrients from discs. That’s why a good night’s sleep is so important.

When you stand up, you begin to increase the pressure on your spine. When you sit down, you increase the pressure even more.

But sitting at a desk hunched over a laptop is just about the worst position for your spine because of the way it compresses your spine, chest and even your lungs and other organs. Staying seated for a long period of time is damaging enough, but poor posture makes the situation that much worse.

The musculoskeletal problems from sitting with poor posture are fairly obvious. Neck pain and headaches. Upper and lower back pain and stiffness. But the downstream effects can be far more serious and long-lasting.

When spinal alignment is altered, it affects how the nervous system functions. Because the nervous system controls every other system in the body, sitting with poor posture can lead to digestive problems, respiratory issues, poor sleep, and an inability to focus and concentrate. It can also contribute to the breakdown of bone, causing conditions like arthritis and osteoporosis.

“Keep your spine in line and you’ll be fine” is what we say here at In Good Hands Chiropractic Center. Of course, this isn’t easy when you’re stuck behind a desk all day. But that doesn’t mean you can’t use correct posture to make sure your spine is mostly aligned.

**Monitor Position**

Position your monitor so the center is at eye level instead of hunching over. Also, place the monitor directly in front of you so you don’t have to work with your head turned all day.

**Back Position**

Invest in a good chair with an adjustable height, seat, back support and armrest. The back of the chair should be slightly curved to support your back, and your back and hips should be pushed as far back on the seat as possible.

**Arm Position**

Your elbows and forearms should be resting on padded armrests so your arms don’t hang and pull your shoulders down. Your arms should be in a slightly open position at an angle of about 100-110 degrees when using your keyboard

**Wrist Position**

Your wrists shouldn’t be angled up, down or out when using a keyboard. Look for an ergonomic keyboard that separates in the middle and angles up in the back, creating a natural, comfortable position for your wrists. Center the keyboard in front of you. Use keyboard wrist pads to add support at the palms.

**Foot Position**

Rather than keeping your feet flat on the ground, they should be angled up slightly, forming a 45-degree angle with the floor. This will tilt your pelvis a bit and reduce tension on your lower back. A wedge or an inexpensive, adjustable footrest will do the trick.

**Desk Stuff**

Get a headset so you don’t have to hold a phone to your ear or wedge the phone between your head and shoulder. Use a mobile device stand so you can avoid hunching over to look at your phone and tablet. Keep your most frequently used desk supplies within close reach to avoid straining your back, neck and joints.

**Move, Move, Move**

The human body wasn’t designed to be seated. It was designed to be in motion. Simply standing up and sitting down isn’t enough. Ideally, you would get up, stretch and walk around every 20 minutes. If that’s not realistic, try twice an hour, or at least once an hour. This will stimulate blood flow, relieve pressure on the spine, and prevent interference in your nervous system.

*Keep these tips in mind not only while you’re at work, but when your kids are using computers and gadgets at home. Show them how to keep their spine in line! Teaching children good posture at a young age will help them avoid long-term health issues later in life.*