

# Sitting: The Silent Killer?

So, you've been reading about sitting – you know, that thing 90% of us do everyday for eight hours or more. It's been coined as the new smoking epidemic. In fact, Dr. David Agus, a professor of Medicine and Engineering at the University of Southern California, and author of "The End of Illness," found that sitting for five hours a day, even if you go to the gym for an hour, is equivalent to smoking a pack of cigarettes a day. A PACK a day.

But what do you do about it? Technological advances only fuel the sedentary lifestyle, not fight it. As a physical therapist, I regularly see common ailments caused by sitting or overuse (e.g., stare-downs with your computer screen and constant typing). These include carpal tunnel, tendonitis, postural issues, and chronic headaches, just to name a few.

## Get Movin'

This newly discovered "sitting disease" is no joke. Effects from sitting include depression, high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity. Sitting should be limited to 20 minute increments if at all possible. Get up, do a jumping jack, and grab a cup of water before sitting back down. To help remind you to move, you can use

a program such as Eyeleo or Workrave. These both allow you to set reminders at an interval of your choice (Just make sure to listen to it).

## Rearrange Your Workstation

Whether your workstation has you sitting or standing, the height of the keyboard and monitor along with the placement of your mouse and desk chair are essential to ensuring proper posture and back alignment while working.

If you're having pain, early treatment and education is of utmost importance. Physical therapists are experts in improving mobility and function. Thanks to Direct Access you can visit one of our physical therapists without a physician's referral, helping you reach recovery more quickly (and minimizing the likelihood of a worsened condition). In many cases, you will be armed with the knowledge you need after only one visit.

## Stretch

Often I speak with my patients about how they can minimize their pain throughout the day simply by doing exercises at their desk. From shoulder blade squeezes to neck retraction, there

are several ways to help keep your muscles in motion.

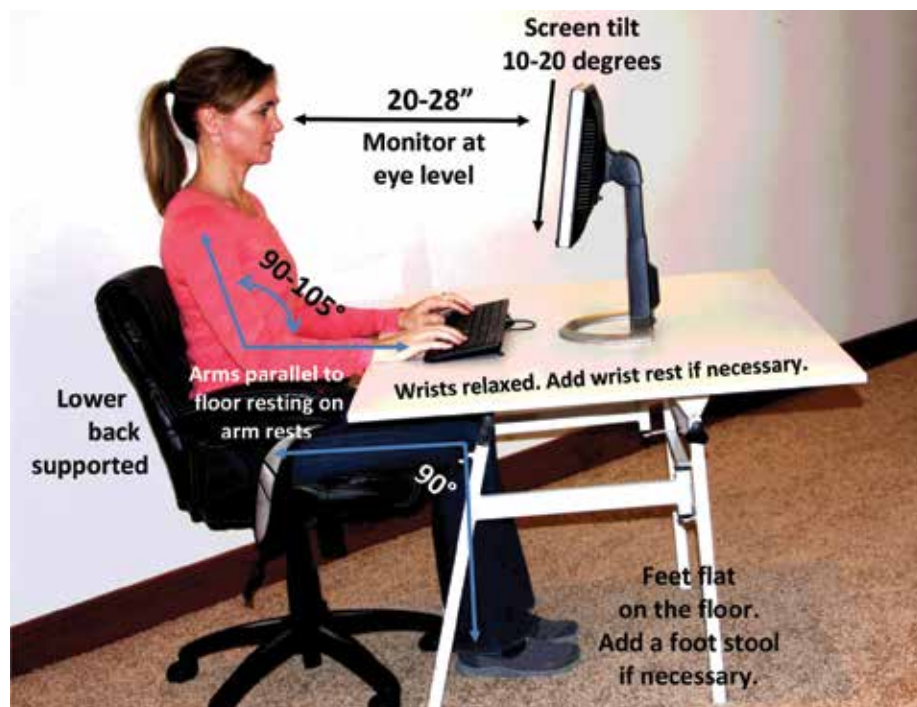
When you're on the phone, stand up and walk around your office. Furthermore, don't send e-mails to someone across the hall (walk over to them instead!).

## Invest

Adjustable, or standing, desks are becoming readily available. Although not every organization is financially prepared to take on this additional cost, it may be worth investing in one for yourself. Standing is similar to walking: it increases blood flow, improves posture and burns extra calories (it also helps undo the cardiovascular damage done by sitting).

At this point you're probably thinking about that neck ache you've been experiencing, or the creative ways you can add more standing time to your day. Either way, I'd like to help you kick the smoking habit you didn't know you had. 🐶

— Brian Hartz



If you're having  
pain, early  
treatment and  
education  
is of utmost  
importance.



Brian Hartz and his staff at HARTZ Physical Therapy have been helping Lancaster County residents improve their overall health and function for more than 14 years. Locally owned and independently operated, HARTZ Physical Therapy has locations in Lancaster, Lititz, and Ephrata. Call today to schedule your \*Direct Access consultation.

\*Direct Access saves you time and money. See a physical therapist without a physician's referral!

CONTENT PROVIDED BY:



www.hartzpt.com

100 Highlands Drive, Suite 100  
Lititz, 17543 • (717) 625-2228

90 Good Drive, Suite 201  
Lancaster, 17603 • (717) 735.8880

1635 West Main Street, Suite 500  
Ephrata, 17522 • (717) 738.0004