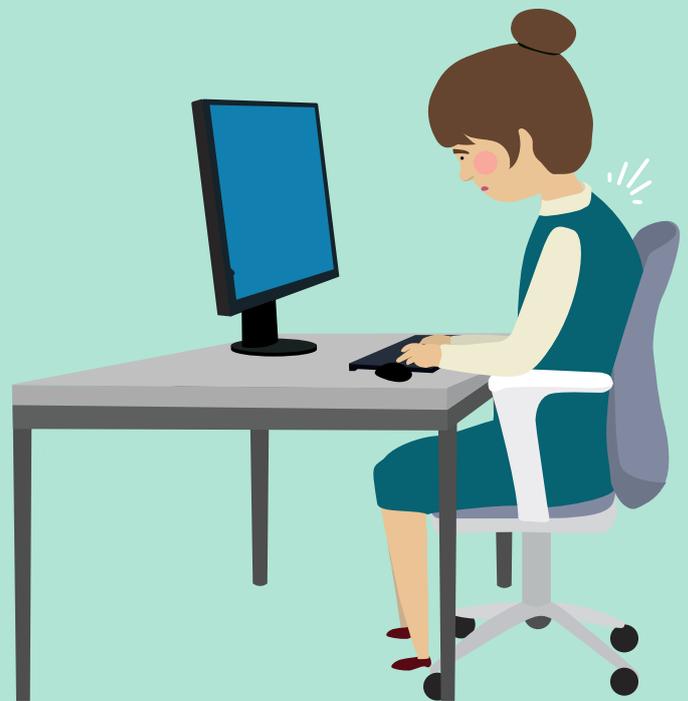# Posturite
Because Health Matters

Back pain in the workplace

It's not always possible to avoid back pain. The spine is a complex structure that plays a central role in supporting, moving and protecting our bodies. Back pain doesn't always have an obvious cause — there are many risk factors to consider: posture, ergonomics, exercise and poor movement.

Back pain in the workplace*
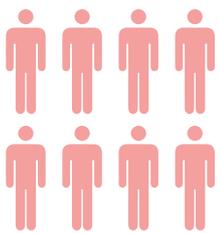
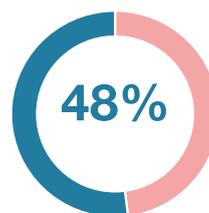Around **2.5 million** people experience back pain every day in the UK

1 in 5 back pain sufferers have given up their job or reduced hours to cope with their condition

Treating back pain costs the NHS **£1 billion** a year

63% of managers experience back pain once a month, compared with **53%** of manual workers - with many citing poor posture and sedentary lifestyles as a cause
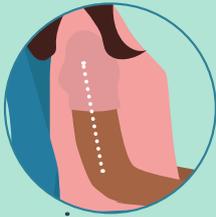
48% said they've been in pain for more than **five years**

*https://www.news-medical.net/news/20181009/Survey-25-million-people-experience-back-pain-every-day-in-the-UK.aspx

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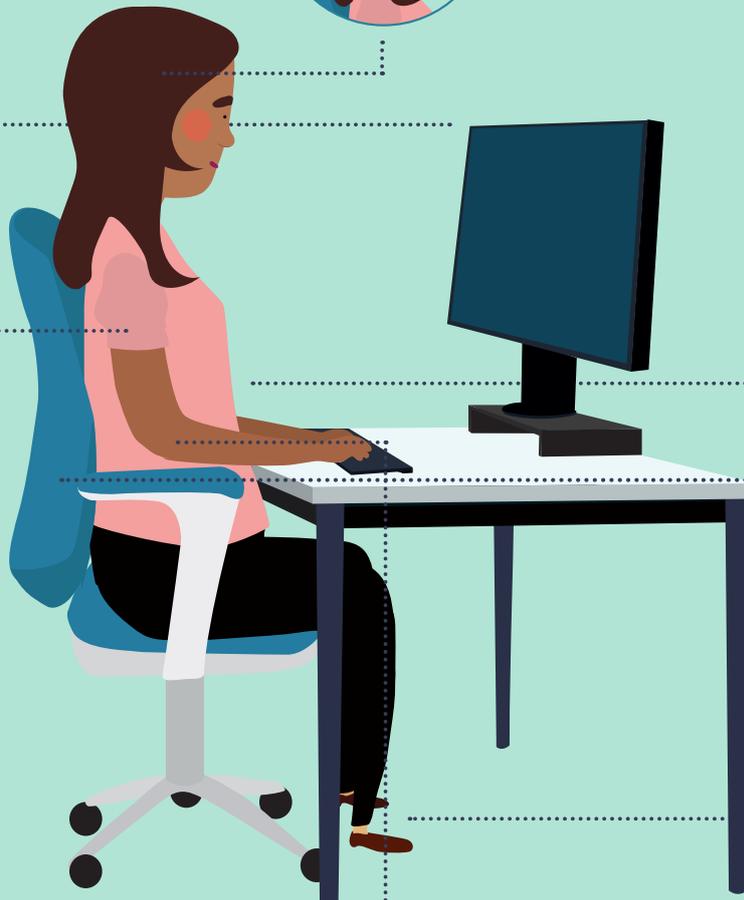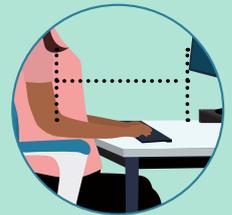
Check your workstation ergonomics

Arms relaxed by your side

Balanced head,
not leaning forward

Screen approximately
arm's length from you

Sit back in the
chair with back
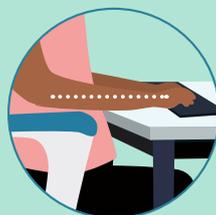rest adjusted
suitably

Top of screen
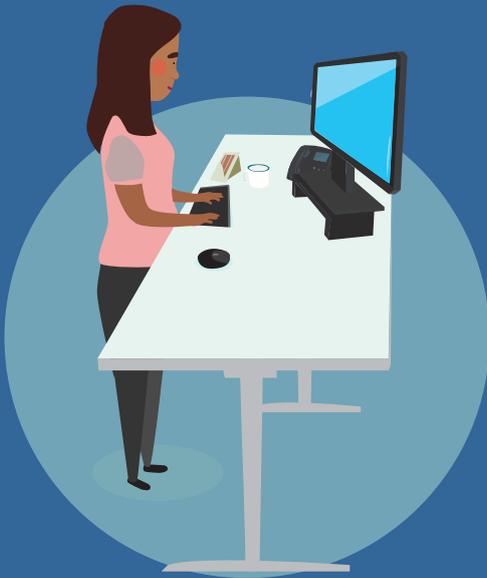about eye level

Forearms parallel to desk

Feet supported on the
floor or on a footrestt

Become an active worker

Use a sit-stand desk

Regular stretching and moving breaks

Use a chair with a movement mechanism so you can rock while you sit

Walk, yoga, or sports on your lunch break

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Make sure your monitors are adjusted properly

- Your eyes should be level with the top part of your screen

- Sit about an arm's length away from your screen

- Place your main monitor directly in front of you to reduce twisting

- Make sure there's no glare from light sources

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Use an ergonomic chair

Ergonomic chairs typically come with a range of adjustment features so you can position each part according to your body's proportions.

Neckrest

Backrest tilt/height

Armrests

Seat tilt/depth

Lumbar support

Gas stem height

Try a compact keyboard and vertical mouse

While it may not feel like your mouse or keyboard have anything to do with your back, the positioning and design of both of these accessories will affect the way your body is positioned.
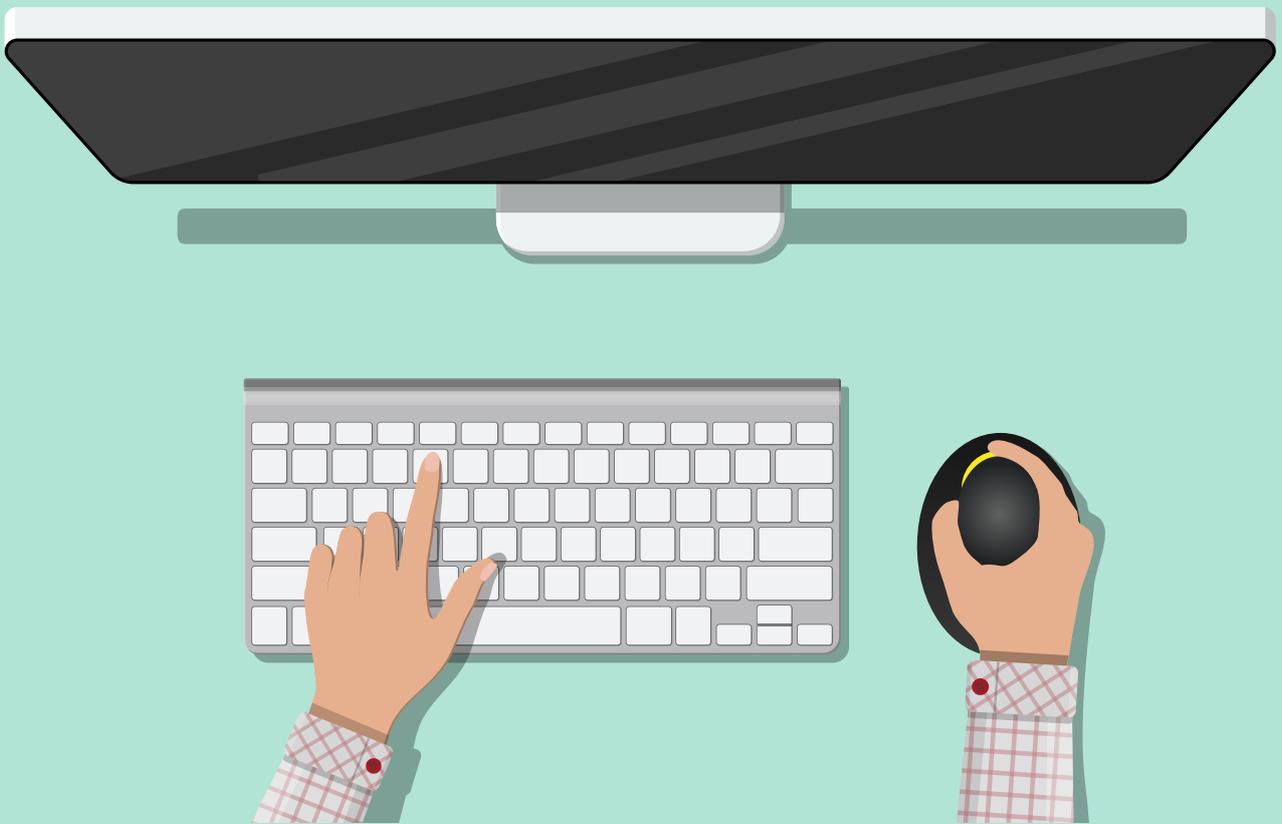
Compact keyboard
Eliminates number pad to create shorter board to reduce the distance to your mouse and keep your forearms perpendicular to your body.

Vertical mouse
Positions your forearm in a neutral handshake position (rather than twisting as with a standard mouse) to improve your alignment.

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Check your lumbar support

Not all chairs have sufficient lower back support, which over time can make you feel achy and even cause injury. If your chair back is too flat, try adding a lumbar roll. A lumbar roll is designed to sit in the inward curve of your lower back to improve sitting posture.

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Pick up healthy working habits

Learn about good sitting postures for all the devices you use. If you use laptops or handheld devices, make sure you limit your usage or use suitable equipment like laptop and tablet stands.

Good laptop position

Top of screen at eye level, an arm's length away

Balanced head, not hanging forward

Forearms parallel to desk, relaxed by side

Sit back in chair for better back support

Space behind knees

Feet supported on the floor or on a footrest

Embrace agile working

Agile working encourages movement between different environments, which can help prevent sedentary behaviour. When care is taken not to sit in poor postures for long periods of time, the risk of any kind of musculoskeletal disorder is reduced.

Some of the benefits of moving between environments ~ throughout the day include:
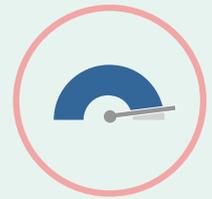
Reduce risk of coronary heart disease

Prevent musculoskeletal problems

Reduce blood pressure

Reduce high cholesterol

Improve mental health

Concentrate for longer

Be more productive

Get a better sleep

Useful resources

https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/Patient-Caregiver-Education/Fact-Sheets/Low-Back-Pain-Fact-Sheet

https://www.news-medical.net/news/20181009/Survey-25-million-people-experience-back-pain-every-day-in-the-UK.aspx

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