



UES

Unsupported Elbow Syndrome





THE BATTLE AGAINST UES

UES (Unsupported Elbow Syndrome) is a condition where the Levator Scapulae muscle spasms from being overworked due to unsupported elbows. The muscle from the shoulder blade to the neck contracts, getting shorter, harder and less flexible. Without adequate support, the elbows are working as if they were holding a 20-pound dumbbell creating a painful trigger point. Fancy expensive chairs are not the answer, but thankfully there are solutions and preventative actions that can alleviate this painful occurrence.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING TO ME?

People with UES typically have the following symptoms in common:

Overweight

69% of adults 20 years and older are overweight

Poor Posture

Poor posture effects stress level, digestive system, happiness level, and much more

Stiff Neck

10% of the adult population at any one time is suffering from a stiff neck

Back, Neck, & Shoulder Pain

Americans spend at least \$50 billion each year on alleviating back-related pain

Over the years that I have been a clinician, I have discovered a pattern of dysfunction that can be commonly found in patients working at a desk or driving a car. These activities have two unhealthy factors in common. First, they both require a substantial amount of sitting. Secondly, they both promote the use of unsupported elbows when sitting. Gravity is not your friend if you work at a desk or drive for a substantial amount of time.

HOW YOU CAN HAVE RELIEF



REPOSITION AT YOUR DESK

Most people sit and pull their keyboard out from under the desk. **RECOMMENDATION** - Move the monitor back on the desk top and place keyboard and mouse on top of the desk. Your chair should be able to slide underneath the desk allowing you to have supported elbows.

CHANGE MUSCLE LENGTHS FREQUENTLY

- For the lower back, get up and take a walk to the restroom or water cooler.
- For the neck and shoulders, do recommended stretching for 5 minutes to reduce muscle tension.



CHANGE TO STANDING WORKSTATION

For every 2 hours that you sit at a desk, we recommend standing for at least 20 minutes. Adjustable desks are available from various suppliers with electric and pneumatic options.



THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF SITTING

Slow Metabolism

Studies have proven that excessive sitting has a negative effect on the body's metabolic system. "Our bodies are breaking down from obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, depression and the cascade of health ills and everyday malaise that come from what scientists have named 'sitting disease.'"

James Levine, MD, PhD

Multiplies Compressive Force on Lumbar Spine

Sitting exerts twice as much compressive force on your spine as standing.

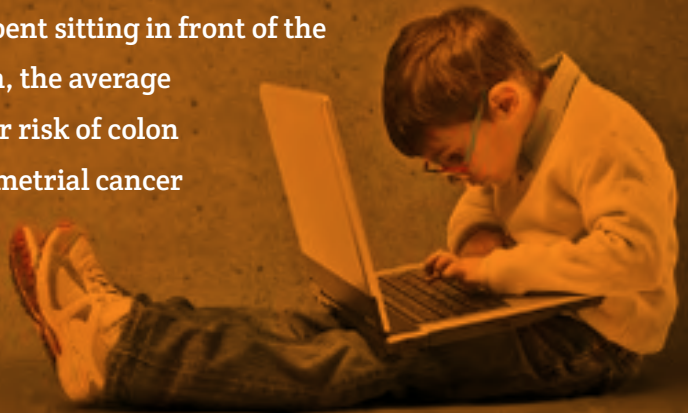
Regularly moving and stretching throughout the day will help keep your joints, ligaments, muscles and tendons loose - helping you feel more comfortable, and relaxed which will increase your productivity.

Changes Breathing Pattern

Sitting increases compression in the abdomen by forcing us to elevate our chest to inhale, which makes our Scalene muscles work harder. This means we will take 12-15 more breaths per minute - 5000-8000 more breaths over the course of an entire work day.

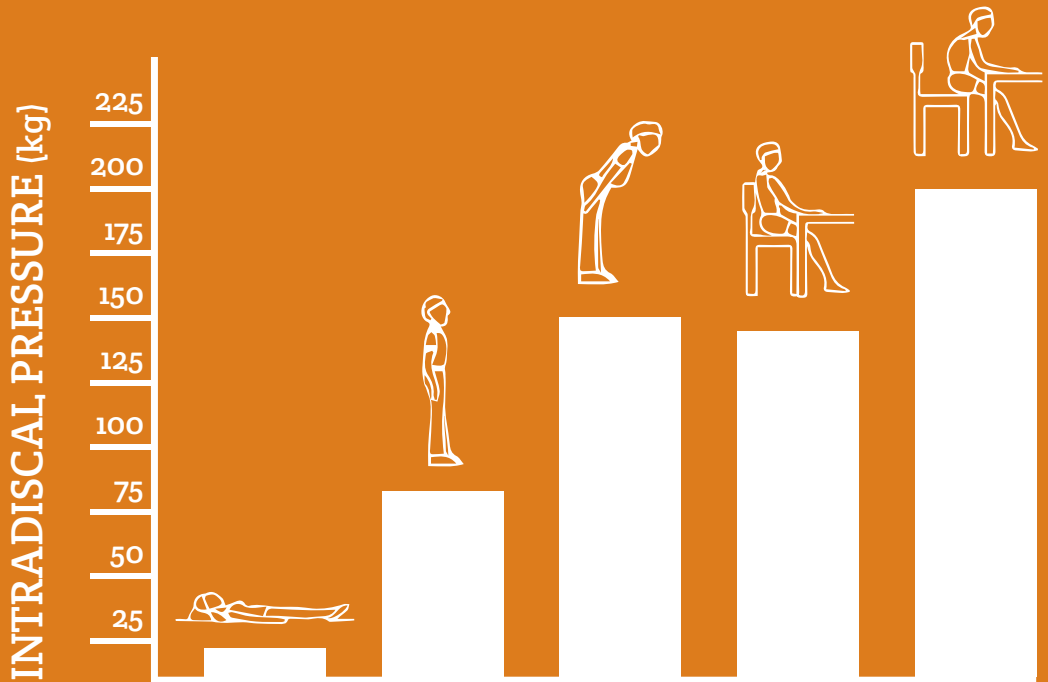
BUT I LIKE TO SIT

Sitting is the new smoking — with an average of 5 hrs. and 40 minutes per workday spent sitting, our risk of serious illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, obesity, and even depression is rapidly on the rise. Research also shows that hitting the gym is not the answer. Regardless of fitness level, sitting is bad for you. A new study puts some precise numbers on the cancer risks associated with too much sitting. For every two hours spent sitting in front of the computer or television, the average person raises his or her risk of colon cancer by 8%, of endometrial cancer by 10% and of lung cancer by 6%. Stand up, it's good for your mind & body!



INTRADISCAL PRESSURE MEASUREMENTS

@ VARIOUS POSITIONS



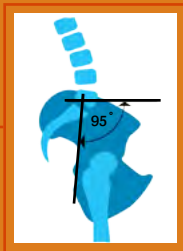
HOW

SITTING CAN DAMAGE YOUR LOWER SPINE

Standing ____

When standing upright, the base of the spine is curved. This is referred to as the lumbar curve.

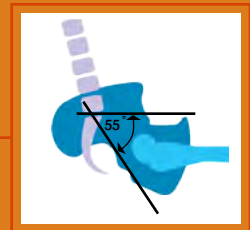
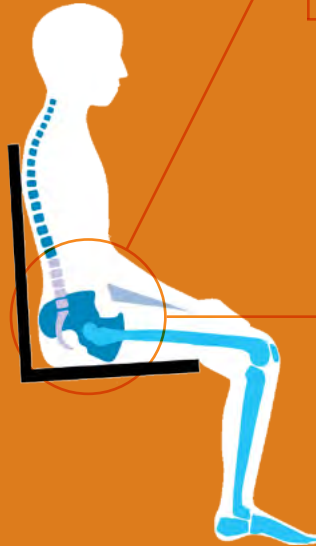
When we are forced to adopt the three right angles seating position the base of the lumbar curve flattens...



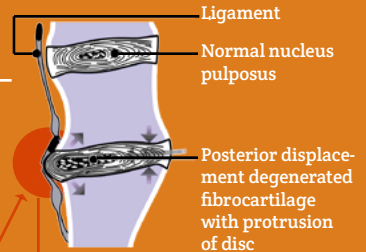
Standing upright results in transferring weight forward onto the discs.

Right Angle Sitting ____

...This can result in discomfort and as we become more sedentary, permanent damage can occur.



Sitting like the above illustration encourages fidgeting in an effort to minimize discomfort and the onset of back pain.



The flat back posture when sitting, stretches the supporting ligaments and soft tissues at the back of the spine. This may also exacerbate potential disc prolapses.

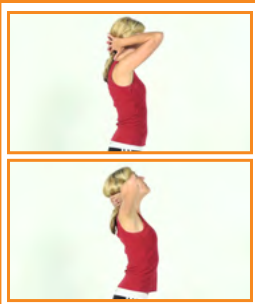
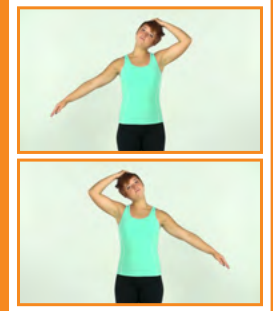
Exercises



CERVICAL SIDE BEND STRETCH WITH OPPOSITE-SIDE PRESSURE

- Place palm of hand against opposite side of head.
- Gently pull as shown.
- Repeat with other hand in opposite direction.

Perform 1 set of 4 repetitions, twice a day. Hold exercise for 20 seconds. Rest 30 seconds between sets.



CERVICAL EXTENSION WITH PECTORAL STRETCH

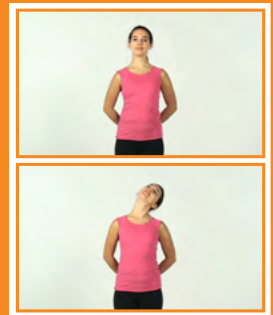
- Sit or stand with proper posture.
- Interlace fingers behind neck - elbows out to the side.
- Move neck and shoulders backward until a stretch is felt on front of neck and chest.

Perform 1 set of 3 repetitions, twice a day. Hold exercise for 10 seconds.

SCALeni DIAGONAL STRETCH

- Stand, hold hands behind back.
- Lower shoulder, tilt head to right, and slightly upward.
- Repeat with other side.

Perform 1 set of 3 repetitions, twice a day. Hold exercise for 10 seconds.

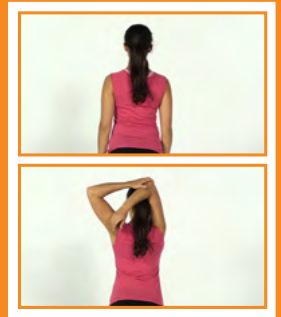


INFERIOR SHOULDER CAPSULE STRETCH

- Raise involved arm over and behind head, elbow bent.
- Grasp elbow or wrist of involved arm with uninvolvement arm.
- Pull gently until a stretch is felt.

Perform 1 set of 3 repetitions, twice a day.

Hold exercise for 10 seconds.



SITTING LUMBAR FLEXION STRETCH

- Sit in chair with knees apart.
- Slowly bend forward and reach between legs.
- Hold stretch and return to sitting position and repeat.

Perform 1 set of 3 repetitions, twice a day.

Hold exercise for 10 seconds.



SITTING SIDE BEND THORACIC STRETCH

- Sit towards front of chair so that arms hang in line with front chair legs.
- Keep feet and knees wide to help maintain balance.
- Place left hand on left side of head.
- Lean to right, sliding right hand down the right leg of chair.
- Return to start position and repeat.

Perform 1 set of 3 repetitions, twice a day.

Hold exercise for 10 seconds.





ACTIVE SITTING HAMSTRING STRETCH

- Sit against a wall, chair, or on firm surface, knees bent.
- Keep a proper curve in lower back, as shown.
- Flex left foot upward, while straightening knee.
- Repeat stretch with other leg.

Special Instructions:

Do not allow low back to lose the curve. It is common to experience shaking in the leg.

Perform 1 set of 4 repetitions, twice a day. Hold exercise for 10 seconds.

DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

- Place hands on stomach near bellybutton.
- When inhaling, stomach should push hands outward.

Optional Variation:

- Put hands on top of shoulders.
- When breathing in chest should not elevate.

Perform 10 sets for 10 seconds.



SEE... WASN'T THAT EASY!



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Play Better.
Live Better.

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