

## HELEN TO THE RESCUE ARE YOU IN A SLUMP?



Do you have a job where you sit at a desk all day? You may think that you couldn't possibly be doing your body any harm because, after all, you're just sitting. WRONG! Desk jobs can wreak havoc on your body causing lower back and neck pain. Before you throw in the towel and change jobs you should know that there are many things you can do to reduce these symptoms.

### WHY DOES SITTING AROUND ALL DAY CAUSE BACK PAIN?

The spine is the body's central support structure for the body, giving it much-needed flexibility while remaining relatively rigid to support our weight. By design, the spine is supposed to move around freely. Our body is naturally built to stand upright. It helps the bones maintain strength, exercises the muscles that hold them together, and allows better blood circulation. Sitting down for a long period disrupts this process, pushing your body out of alignment and affecting your overall health.

### LOCKED UP

Sitting for a long period locks your body in place, which makes it more difficult for you to move when you stand up. When you experience that stiff or slightly burning sensation when you stand up, that's your body trying to recover from the unnatural position that you've locked it in. This can lead to a pronounced slouch forming in your upper body, which can lead to serious issues like kyphosis (a forward rounding of the back), joint problems, and improper circulation.

### INCREASED WEIGHT GAIN!

Moving around is one of the body's best ways to burn calories. Sitting all day keeps your digestive system from running efficiently, which leads to increased weight gain.

### TAKE A BREAK

One of the best ways to prevent back pain or complications from sitting down is to limit the time you spend in your chair. Get up and walk! For every half hour at work, sit for 20 minutes, stand for 8 minutes, and move around for at least 2 minutes.

### START PAYING ATTENTION

You can't begin to correct posture issues until you become aware of them. Don't slump in that chair!

### CHECK YOUR ARMS

Are they parallel to the ground when typing or are you reaching for your keyboard? Is your head protruding forward beyond its normal position resting atop your spine? Is your computer screen at eye level? This will keep you from neck strain.

### TRY AN UPRIGHT STANDING DESK

A stand-up desk is simply what it sounds like; it's a desk that allows you to stand while working. They offer standalone upright desks and tops that can go on top of almost any desk to lift your computer or other work items up.

*You don't get the butt you want by sitting on it!*

Yours in Fitness,  
Helen Pufahl MS, NASM-CPT



Helen's love of fitness began at an early age. She practiced dance and gymnastics as well as track and field. She's an Exercise Physiologist with over 35 years of experience. She is also a certified personal trainer, corrective exercise specialist, nutrition consultant, and Senior fitness specialist.

Helen is the owner of Unique Health & Fitness.

## EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO MOVE IT *and* LOSE IT!

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