

# Simple Office Exercises

## Preventing Repetitive Motion Injuries and Reducing the Effects of Sitting

*Listed on this sheet are simple exercises you can do at your desk or in your office to increase your activity throughout the day. These movements should be fairly easy. Don't try to force anything - if it feels difficult, choose another exercise. Try to take 5 minutes each hour to do some (say 3-5) of these exercises.*

### STAND UP AND SIT DOWN/CHAIR SQUATS

Stand up out of your chair without using your hands to help you. Lower yourself back into your chair. Perform 10 repetitions.

### REACH FOR THE SKY/UPPER BODY STRETCH

Sit with your feet firmly planted on the floor. Ensure your head and back are upright. Raise both hands above your head. Reach up towards the ceiling, as high as possible, until you feel a stretch in your upper body. Hold for 20 seconds, repeat two times.

### YES AND NO/NECK STRETCH

Sit with feet planted firmly on the floor. Ensure your head and back are upright. Turn your head towards your left shoulder. Hold for 20 seconds, repeating two times on each side. Lift your chin up towards the ceiling. Hold for 20 seconds, repeat two times and again with your chin lowered towards your chest.

### SIDE STRETCH

Sit with feet firmly planted on the floor. Ensure your head and back are upright. Raise one arm above your head and the other alongside your body. Slide the lowered arm down while reaching to the opposite side with your raised hand. Create an arc with the raised arm (you should feel a stretch along your longest side). Hold for 20 seconds and repeat two times on each side.

### SHOULDER RAISES

Raise your shoulders to your ears. Hold for 10 seconds and then relax. Repeat three times.

### SHOULDER CIRCLES

Roll your shoulders forward ten times. Rest and roll your shoulders back ten times.

### THE TWISTER/LOWER BACK STRETCH

Inhale and as you exhale turn to the right and grab the back of your chair with your right hand. Grab the arm of the chair with your left. With your eyes level, use your grasp on the chair to help twist your torso around as far to the back of the room as possible. Hold the twist for 10 seconds and slowly come back to facing forward. Repeat on the other side.

### SEATED LEG EXTENSIONS

Engage your abs and keep your posture tall. Sit in your chair with your back straight and knees bent at about a 90-degree angle. Raise one leg, extend it fully until it is parallel to the ground. Point your toes out, keeping your leg as straight as possible. Hold for three to five seconds and return to the starting position (leg is still raised!). For one set, perform this motion 15-20 times on each leg.

#### HAND AIR CIRCLES

Clench both fists and stretch both hands out in front of you (arms straight and parallel to your desk). Make circles in the air, first in one direction, to the count of ten. Reverse the circles. Perform two sets of the air circles making sure to reverse the circle.

#### POINT YOUR FINGERS

Stretch your left hand out in front of you, pointing your fingers toward the floor. Use your right hand to increase the stretch, pushing your fingers down gently toward the body. Repeat with the other hand. Now stretch your left hand out straight in front of you, wrist bent, with fingers pointing skyward. Use your right hand to increase the stretch pulling the fingers gently back toward your body. Repeat on the other side. Hold each stretch for 10 seconds and return to the starting position.

#### TORSO TWISTS

Sit with your backbone stretched and upright. Hold the edge of your desk with your fingers and thumbs. Keep your feet flat against the ground. Engage your abs and use your core as the axis to swivel your desk chair from left to right. Perform at least four or five sets of 20 rotations (one rotation equals one left-right-left motion). You can also do this in a stationary chair by twisting the upper body from side to side.

#### TOE RAISES

Lift your toes while keeping your heels firmly on the ground. Perform two sets of 10 to 20 repetitions.

*The following exercises are done while standing!*

#### RIGHT/LEFT PUNCH

While rocking foot to foot, punch with alternating arms across your body. Perform 20 repetitions.

#### HAMSTRING CURL

Bend arms at the elbow. Bring one foot up toward your backside while straightening your arms so that your hands are down when your foot is up. Return to the starting position and lift the other leg. Perform 20 repetitions.

#### KNEE LIFTS

Just like hamstring curls, except you lift your knee up in front of you as your arms go down.

#### SIDE LUNGE

Take a big step to one side. Point the toes forward and bend one knee, keeping the other leg straight. Push back up. Perform 10 per side.

#### CALF RAISES

Stand in front of your desk or other piece of furniture so you can hold on for balance. Standing with your feet shoulder width apart, press up onto your tippy toes, pause at the top, and then lower back down. Perform three sets of 12-15 repetitions.