

# Be Good to Your Back

**Most of us do not practise good postural habits in our daily activities and at work. Bending to lift heavy loads or slouching at our desks - these are some of the common bad habits that we unconsciously practise. Over time, these may cause overstretched ligaments, fatigued muscles and overstressed joints resulting in back pain.**

Although we are not able to control the natural "wear and tear" of our backs, we can minimise the mechanical strain on our backs by observing good posture.

## Good postural habits include:

- Moving your head, neck and back frequently so that they will not be in prolonged fixed positions.
- Adjusting the height of your chair, using a document holder or sloping desk surface to avoid looking down constantly.
- Sitting up straight and not slouching.
- Getting up from your chair every half an hour to stretch your back, or doing some simple exercises at your chair.

## Staying Healthy at Work

Position your computer monitor away at arm's length and at eye level.

Keep your wrists straight and use minimum force when typing.

Ensure that there is sufficient space for you to stretch your legs once in a while.



Keep your head and neck in an upright position.

Rest your eyes by closing them or gazing at a distant object every half hour.

Keep your shoulders relaxed and elbows close to the body. Use a keyboard tray if necessary.

Make full use of the backrest of your chair and add a cushion if necessary.

## Good Body Mechanics means ...

- Using equipment to help perform work tasks.
- Ensuring that the tools used are in good condition.
- Operating equipment as recommended to ensure safety.
- Alternating between a variety of physical tasks to prevent overusing the same muscles and joints.
- Keeping your back straight and bending your knees when lifting heavy loads off a lower surface.
- Carrying heavy loads close to the body and avoid twisting at the waist.
- Making more than one trip if necessary.
- Moving and not holding static postures for long periods of time.

