



SITTING IS DANGEROUS

Posted on April 20, 2022 by Mindy

There is always a question about sitting and health. Now, recent events have found more people sitting for work or leisure but the question still remains, is sitting dangerous to our health? Before we jump into answering this question, let's take a look at our bodies.

The human body was designed to move. In the beginning, this was survival to keep away from predators and to aid us in the search for food. In many ways, our jobs required us to move for survival. Today though, we, as a species do not have to worry about trying to outrun a predator or gather food. We simply go to the store and with curbside pickup and online ordering, we now do not even have to walk around and "gather" our food. Instead, we can pay someone else to do that chore for us.

Now since our bodies were meant to move, there are some safeguards put into place. This includes storing fat for energy for a quick getaway and a muscle called a heart. This muscle allows us to keep pumping blood through our bodies while we make the escape.

While all these safeguards were created to protect us, they have not adapted to the change in times where we really do not have to move much to survive. This not only includes the basics of life but also our jobs, and leisure time. There are many more examples of how our active life has changed to one strapped to a chair, so let's learn how this sedentary lifestyle affects our bodies.

How a Sedentary Lifestyle Affects Your Body

On a normal day, one gets up from approximately eight hours of sleep and goes to the kitchen where one sits down. You drive to work or ride the bus and arrive at your job, where you probably sit for eight hours. You go home, cook dinner, sit on the couch to watch some entertainment, or play video games and go to bed to repeat this process the next day. Now since you are not running around protecting yourself or gathering food, you are burning less of your fat reserves.

This, in turn, means weight gain and obesity, which also leads to a cluster of issues such as increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess body fat around the middle, and **abnormal cholesterol levels**. This cluster is also referred to as a metabolic syndrome.

It is true that this is not the lifestyle of many but in several situations, the picture painted is very true for young and old. While some can envision a person over 18 having this lifestyle, more and more young people are going to school, coming home, and sitting in front of a computer screen or game system, which means they are in the same health boat that individuals are who work at desk jobs.

Other Reasons Why Prolonged Sitting is Bad for Your Health:

- It can weaken your legs and glutes

- Your anxiety and depression might spike
- Can lead to deep vein thrombosis
- Significant stress on spinal structures as well as other joints, such as the shoulders and hips

Beyond the problems listed previously, sitting for over eight hours a day increases your chances of dying from cardiovascular disease and cancer.

How can you save your health from the dangers of sitting?

But what is one to do when so many jobs require one to sit? First, it has been discovered that 75 minutes of moderate exercise can counter many of the negative effects of sitting. Another approach to use is to lose weight. While exercise and diet can help you lose the weight you have gained due to sitting all day, certain herbs can aid you in this weight loss. This is especially true if you drink herbal tea throughout the day.

One herb that is easy to make into tea is ginger. Drinking ginger tea throughout the day will reduce your appetite, increase metabolism, and burn fat. Another herb that will aid you in losing weight is cayenne pepper. While you may not want to make a tea with this herb, how about adding it to the food you eat throughout the day. As an example, add a splash to your eggs for breakfast. When eating lunch, cayenne pepper is tasty when mixed with a bit of low-fat mayo for a sandwich topping. You may think dinner can only mean some Mexican food and this is not the case. Consider adding some cayenne pepper to tomato juice for a pre-dinner drink.

Beyond herbs, exercise is very important as noted previously but you do not have to set aside a full 75 minutes out of your schedule to meet this goal. It has been discovered that even bite-size or snack-size amounts of exercise can add up to 75 minutes, which really means there is no excuse. But how do you really fit in these tiny bits of exercise and still work?

Before we move to some easy ways of reaching that 75-minute mark, keep in mind that these tips also apply to sitting on the couch or in front of the TV.

Get moving after sitting for 30 minutes. In the business world, this can mean walking over to the water cooler or walking to the bathroom. While you are on the phone, consider taking the call standing up.

If your business needs to have a meeting, suggest those going to the meeting not meet in a conference room. Where should you meet? How about having a walking meeting with your colleagues, which can be a challenge but it is worth offering this as an alternative to a sitting meeting.

Another idea that will keep you up on your feet is a standing desk. Due to more people working from home, these "standing desk" products are more available. If this is not a possibility, consider placing your computer on a high table or counter.

While the list above is just a shortlist of suggestions, there are many other opportunities during your day that you can sneak in a bit of exercise if you just look. How about parking as far away as you can from your office or grocery store, which can give you time going up and coming back from the establishment.

Or start a company walking program that occurs during lunch or after work. You can use the same idea when you get home. Get the kids away from the screens and have a family walk around the neighborhood. In a nutshell, if you just picked a few of these snack-size suggestions you would rack up 75 minutes a day in no time.

There is also a downside to all this exercise and that is sore muscles. But as they say, no pain no gain, right. Well, that is true but you can easily make an herbal salve that you can rub on those sore spots. If you would like to make your own, check out the recipe below.

Homemade Sore Muscle Rub

Ingredients

- 2/3 cup coconut oil
- ½ cup of olive oil
- ½ cup of grated ginger
- ¼ cup of dried comfrey
- ½ cup of Shea butter
- ½ cup of beeswax
- Essential oils that include cypress, rosemary, and lavender

Directions

1. Place the first three ingredients in a double broiler.
2. Warm the ingredients on low for an hour.
3. Strain the mixture after an hour.
4. Place the mixture back into the double boiler setup.
5. Add Shea butter and beeswax.
6. Put the double broiler on low and heat until everything is melted.
7. Add 40 drops of each essential oil listed
8. Stir and allow to cool until you can touch the mixture.
9. Pour into containers for later use.

Apply the herbal muscle rub to sore areas. Repeat as often as needed.

Dr. Nicole's [Joint & Movement Salve](#) contains a soothing, anti-inflammatory blend of Arnica,

Calendula, and St. John's Wort for unpleasant joint conditions, including: carpal tunnel, tennis elbow, OA, RA, and knee pain and it's available for purchase in [the Apothecary](#).

Given the research, breaking up long blocks of sitting to flex your muscles seems like a wise move for all of us, so try to build more activity into your day.

Take baby steps. It doesn't have to be vigorous. Just stand up and move your muscles. Even if you're doing 30 minutes per day of physical activity, it matters what you do the other 23 hours of the day.

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Comments



Brenda - 2022-06-08 02:41:50

When do you add the comfrey?



Hope - 2022-04-23 12:41:21

I retired in 2020 from 35 years as a massage therapist. I had 10 years off to raise my son, when I returned to work in 2005 I was amazed at the difference in bodies from the 1980's. More neck and back problems due to more computer usage.



Elizabeth - 2022-04-22 10:56:19

Omg ☹️



Elizabeth - 2022-04-22 10:54:04

Good to know



Michael W Miller - 2022-04-21 14:19:50

I just planted a garden so now I am moving a bit more. I cycle so that helps when the weather is good.