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Slouching.... So Wrong, But It Feels So Right

Fifty percent of people in the industrialized world suffer from some form of back pain and many are related to poor seat design and posture. I am on the road a little bit more these days, and I had been having some neck pain as a result. My 4'11" stature has never allowed me to sit flat footed in an office chair, so I recently switched to sitting on a yoga ball which has helped alleviate some of the pain.

After looking into this a little bit more, it amazed me how much proper posture and chair design can take a toll on your body. Improper posture can lead to muscle fatigue, pain, and even disk degeneration overtime. The good news is there are things we can do to improve the natural habit of slouching!

Move More, Sit Less

No matter what your work station consists of, take movement breaks every hour and change your postures when you start to fatigue. Research findings recommend the following: sit for 20, stand for 8, and move for 2 minutes per half hour. You can work up to this! Start by standing for short periods such as 5-10 minutes every hour.

How Does your Work Station Measure Up?

- Your chair should support your low back; feet should rest firmly on the ground or footrest slightly in front of you
- Your monitor should be directly in front of you, at an arm's length distance with your eyes at the same level as the tool bar
- Your mouse should be positioned close to you near the edge of the desk
- Your keyboard should be centered in front of you and near the edge of the desk

Standing Posture

- Good foot support (low heeled supportive shoes or insoles)
- Knees slightly bent
- Weight balanced on both feet evenly, with feet hip width apart Shoulders back and relaxed
- Abdominal muscles slightly activated
- Neck and head in line with shoulders from the side
- From the side, should be able to draw a straight line from earlobes, shoulder, hip, to ankle

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