# Musculoskeletal Health

## Lower back pain and spinal health

Lower back pain is very common around the world and is caused by many different factors including prolonged inactivity, lack of stretching, poor posture, the wrong footwear, improper lifting, obesity, aging, and genetic factors. Our spine is supported by the core muscles, and if the core is weak, we're susceptible to low back pain.

Tips for better back health
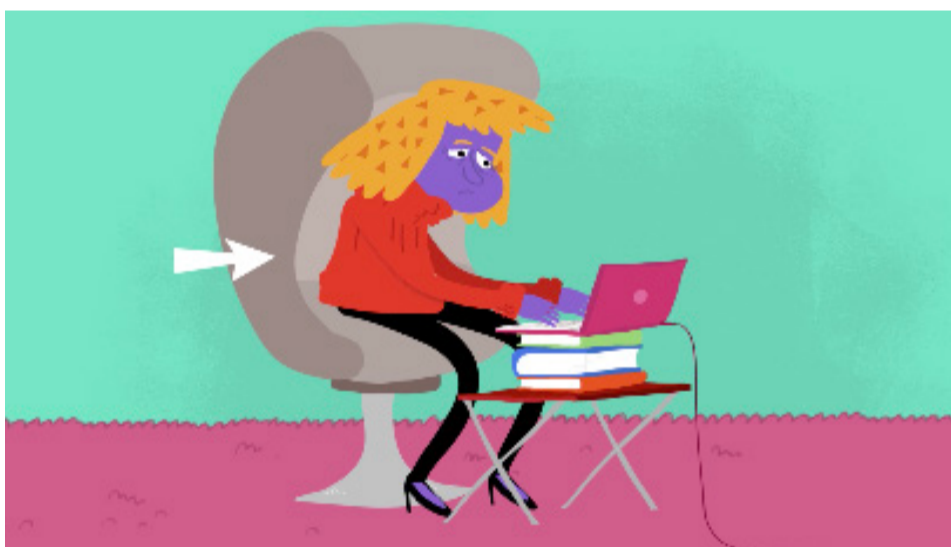
Pay attention to your posture. It's important to keep your head and neck aligned and positioned over your hips. This helps prevent unnecessary strain caused by leaning or slouching forward.
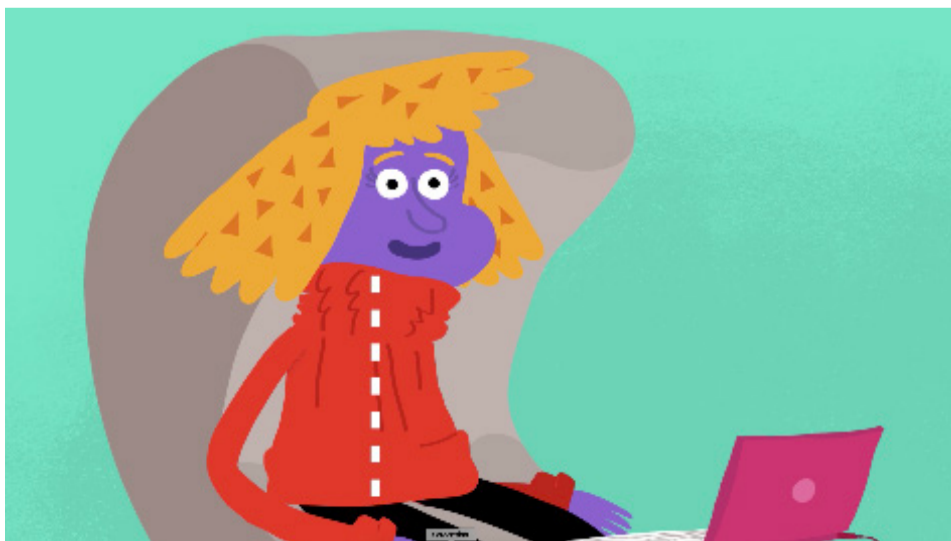
Stop sitting so much – sitting for long periods can cause increased pressure on the spinal disks. Combine sitting, standing and movement to protect your back throughout the day.

When you lift something, be sure to bend your knees, keep your back straight and keep the item close to your body. Do not twist as you lift. Eliminate repetitive movement patterns that involve twisting and rotating. Sometimes an extra step might make all the difference to avoid twisting.

What you can do today & every day

- Stretch your back every day – a lot can be accomplished in just a few minutes
- Wear supportive, comfortable, low-heeled shoes
- Sleep on a mattress that's firm enough to support your spine and reduce spinal curvature
- Maintain a healthy diet and weight
- Quit smoking to improve blood flow & the health of spinal tissues

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