

# Julie Dass Injury Clinic

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Exercise plan:  
**Desk Workers**

Patient:  
**Mrs Julie Dass**

Date:  
**27th Mar 2017**

## Complete Guide to Correct Desk Ergonomics



1. Elbows are at right angles with your upper arms, relaxed at the side of your body. 2. Wrists should be straight rather than bent up or down or deviated. 3. If possible your hips should be slightly higher than your knees. If you cannot place your feet on the floor in the above position you may need a footrest. If your knees are higher than your hips you may need the desk raised in height. 4. Your eyes should be level with the top of your display screen, which should be directly in front of you. 5. Do not wedge the telephone between your ear and shoulder. If you are right handed, hold it in your left hand so you can make notes if necessary. Consider using a headset if being on the phone is a large part of your job. 6. Use a copyholder if you work with documents. 7. Position the keyboard about 10cm from the front edge of the desk directly in front of you. 8. Avoid using laptops, or if you do have to, elevate the laptop or plug in the keyboard, mouse and monitor.

## Desk Posture Standing



Standing desks, or desks that raise are great for posture and they allow you to vary your position at work. Raise the desk to a comfortable level. Keep laptops or computers directly in front of you. Make sure your shoulders are not hunching upwards, keep them relaxed. Remember to change position regularly, or go for a walk or sit down if your back starts to feel tired. An up-down desk can be found at [www.relaxbackuk.com](http://www.relaxbackuk.com).

## Screen Placement

Place monitors directly in front of you. Keep the monitor high. If you can raise the screen up, then do so. If not, place a monitor stand under the screen to raise it. The top third of the screen should be in-line with your eyes. If your screen is too low, you will tend to forward bend your neck too much placing your muscles under tension. Raising the screen will help you maintain an upright posture.



## Desk Posture Swiss ball sitting



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The classic round gym ball has become quite popular in recent years because of its unstable nature, hence allowing the user to activate core muscles to stabilise the body. This is a great way to improve balance and learn about posture, as they do tend to keep you upright. Slouch on a Swiss ball or adopt poor posture and you will tend to simply roll off. Make sure you get the right height ball – the 65cm is good for men, and the 55cm good for women as a general rule of thumb, but check with your therapist to get the correct size for your height.

## Desk Posture Saddle Stool Sitting



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The saddle stool works on the principle similar to horse riding, that when your legs are splayed apart, its hard to slouch. So shaped like a saddle, the saddle stool keeps you more upright. And they really do work well. Excellent for medium term comfort of around 1-2 hours at a time, then they require a short walk around.

## Back App Saddle Stool



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The saddle stool works on the principle similar to horse riding, that when your legs are splayed apart, its hard to slouch. So shaped like a saddle, the saddle stool keeps you more upright. And they really do work well. The backapp allows gentle motion, activating core and spinal muscles. Visit: [www.backappuk.com](http://www.backappuk.com) or [www.relaxbackuk.com](http://www.relaxbackuk.com).

## Back App Saddle Stool with Footrest



© rehabmypatient.com

The saddle stool works on the principle similar to horse riding, that when your legs are splayed apart, its hard to slouch. So shaped like a saddle, the saddle stool keeps you more upright. And they really do work well. The backapp allows gentle motion, activating core and spinal muscles. You can use a footrest if you need to. Visit: [www.backappuk.com](http://www.backappuk.com) or [www.relaxbackuk.com](http://www.relaxbackuk.com).

## Avoid Forward Bending

If you are a back pain sufferer, you may need to be careful with repetitive forward bending. Think of ways to prevent bending, such as going on to one knee, or widening the legs to make a split-stance (this will drop your height several inches), or avoid picking things up from the floor unless completely necessary. If you do have to bend, do not twist at the same time. When bending you may find it useful to brace the stomach muscles by squeezing the abdomen inwards slightly.



## Good Neck Posture

If you suffer with neck pains, muscle aching across your shoulders, or work related headaches, try reducing the amount of forward neck bending. Keep your neck straight, with your eyes looking forwards. Use a copy holder to keep documents at eye level. Raise your screen so that the top third of the screen is in line with your eyes. Avoid using laptops as much as possible. If you use a smart phone, keep it up or use a smart phone holder.



## Mobile Phone Holder for Posture

If you use a smart phone frequently, it may help your posture to use a phone holder. Alternatively when using a smart phone, try to hold it up towards the line of your eyes. This will help reduce neck pain and fatigue of the neck muscles.



## Posture for Laptop Users

Using a laptop as a substitute desktop is generally considered a bad idea for your posture. It is difficult to get the laptop screen high enough. Always use a laptop stand, or better still, plug your laptop into the desktop monitor, mouse and keyboard. Using a laptop over many months can cause reduction in the normal curvature of the neck, muscle tightness in and around the neck, and can also contribute to headaches.



## Get Up and Move

Avoid sitting for longer than 20 minutes. Get up regularly to mobilise the spine and prevent stiffness.



## Using a document holder

Place a document holder directly to the side of your screen. Raise it up high enough so that it is at eye level. You can use document holders that clip to your monitor, or ones that are free standing on the desk. Using a document holder reduces repetitive forward bending of your neck.



## Using a wrist support

A wrist support can reduce extra wrist extension, and you may find it reduces repetitive strain injuries to the wrist. Wrist supports are attached to the mouse mat, but can also run along the bottom of the keyboard.



## Lat Stretches

Raise both arms above your head. Hold on to one wrist as you stretch. Side-flex your spine to one side and you should feel a stretch just below your armpit.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily**



## Sitting Bend Spine Stretch

Sitting down, round your back and let your arms hang in front of you. You should feel a gentle stretch over your spine.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily**



## Pelvic Tilt Sitting

Sit down with good posture. Draw your belly button inwards (towards the back of the chair slightly) and tilt your pelvis backwards (i.e. flatten your spine against the chair). Return to the start position (arching your back - known as a lumbar Hyperlordosis). This exercise strengthens the deep abdominal muscles and improves core control.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily**



## Standing Extension

Standing up with good posture, extend your back by arching your spine backwards. You can place your hands in the small of your back or at your side for support if you require. Start gently, and keep the exercise within your comfort zone.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily**



## Chair rotation

Sitting down in an upright position, rotate your upper body by moving your hand towards the opposite side of the chair back-rest. You can let the head follow, but progress by keeping the head straight forwards, thus making the rotation stronger. This is a great exercise to do while sitting for long periods of time if you feel your back is getting stiff.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily | Perform both sides**



## Side Flexion Standing

Stand up straight, and bend to the side by running your hand down the outside of your leg. Keep the movement slow and fluid. Repeat to the opposite side. This is a good mobility exercise for the lower and upper back.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily | Perform both sides**



## Side Flexion Sitting 2

Sitting down with good upright posture, run your arm down the side of the chair leg by side-bending your spine. If you have a chair with arms, you may need to sit at the edge of the chair, or sit on a stool. You can make the exercise stronger by using your arm above your head to create more leverage. Repeat to the other side. This is a good mobility exercise for the upper and lower back while sat down, if you feel your back is starting to get stiff.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily | Perform both sides**



## Correct Way to Sit Down and Stand Up

To ensure you sit down correctly, first contract the deep abdominal muscles by squeezing the stomach inwards. Next, lean forwards onto your feet and stick your bottom out slightly to maintain the natural curve in the lower back (known as the Hyperlordosis) and then bend the legs to squat down. Make sure you keep the eyes looking forwards, do not drop the chin. To stand up from sitting, do the opposite: first contract the abdominal muscles, then maintain the curve in the lower back, and push up from the legs.



## Glute stretch sitting 3

Sit on your office chair with good upright posture, and cross one leg over your opposite knee. Twist to the opposite side creating a stretch to your gluteal (buttock) muscles and also a rotation mobilisation to your lower back.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily | Perform both sides**



## Quadriceps stretch

Pull your foot towards your bottom. If you are unsteady on your feet, make sure you hold on to something sturdy like a wall or a table. You will feel a stretch to the quadricep muscles at the front of your thigh.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily | Perform both sides**



## Hip flexor and quad stretch

Stand up with good posture, and bend your knee so your foot goes towards your butt. Extend your hip behind you, to create a stretch to the front and top of your thigh. You may need to hold on to a table for support. This exercise will help to stretch your hip flexor (psoas and rectus femoris muscles), and quadriceps muscle group.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily | Perform both sides**



## Hamstring and calf stretch

Standing up, place your foot on a chair or Swiss ball. Keep your leg straight. Pull your toes and ankle towards you. You should feel a stretch behind your knee and your calf muscle and into the back of your thigh. To make the stretch stronger, push your leg downwards into the ball/chair, or rest your foot on something higher.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily**



## Neck flexion

Tuck your chin in and then roll your head forwards. You should feel a gentle stretch at the back of your neck. Return to the start position.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily**

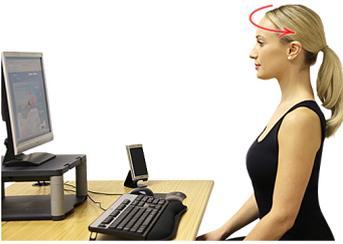


## Neck extension mobilisation

Tilt your head backwards in a slow and controlled manner. You may feel some compression tension building up at the back of the neck, so stop the extension at that point. Stop the exercise immediately if you get any dizziness or blurred vision.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily**





## Neck rotation stretch

Sit up straight in your office chair. Rotate your neck to the opposite side. You should feel a stretch in the lower side of the neck on the same side you are lifting your arm. Repeat each side.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily | Perform both sides**

Video: [http://youtu.be/ZgeO87\\_VFog](http://youtu.be/ZgeO87_VFog)



## Neck semi-circles

Circle your neck to one side, and then the other side. Move your neck in a semi-circle direction. Don't worry if you get some crunching or scrunching in the neck, this is normal. You can use this exercise to get your neck more mobile.

**Repeat 10 times | Perform 1 times daily | Perform both sides**

Video: <http://youtu.be/8QCjZMdcIpc>



## Neck side flexion mobilisation

Sit up straight in your office chair. Side bend your neck so that your ear moves towards your shoulder. Repeat each side. This is an excellent exercise to increase the mobility of a stiff neck.

**Repeat 10 times | Perform 1 times daily | Perform both sides**





## Upper cervical rotation

Sitting with good posture, tuck your chin to your chest (or as far as feels comfortable). Gently rotate your neck by no more than two inches each side. This will help improve your upper neck rotation.

**Repeat 10 times | Perform 1 times daily | Perform both sides**

Video: <http://youtu.be/up6-EElpjJk>



## Shoulder Elevations

Raise both arms above your head. Hold on to one wrist as you stretch and pull upwards gently. Keep your neck straight, avoid tilting your head downwards.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily**



## Scapular setting

To "set" your shoulder blades, imagine you are wearing a v-neck t-shirt back to front. Now pull your shoulder blades downwards and inwards as shown in the diagram, and hold this position. Keep your chin up and maintain good posture.

**Hold for 30 | Repeat 3 times | Perform 1 times daily**

Video: <http://youtu.be/3ZNGy46Afy8>



Dear Mrs Dass, please stop any exercise that causes pain. If you have any questions with an exercise, just email us on [stabletherapycentre@gmail.com](mailto:stabletherapycentre@gmail.com). Good luck and keep with it!