**HR Frequently Asked Questions – Physical Health (updated 16 April)**

* **As a staff member how do you discipline yourself to get up and move out of your chair?**

To discipline yourself to move regularly is mostly about forming new habits. If you stick at something for 2-4 weeks it will become much more automatic.

Therefore, use an alert on your phone every 30-60 minutes to remind you to get up and move about. Alternatively pick something you often do, e.g. checking messages and every time you do, this let it act as a reminder to move. For example, using headphones to take calls so you can stand up and move around your home.

* **I am working at home and my desk set up/equipment is not set up like it would be in the office. What can I do to avoid aches and pains?**

What is comfortable for you is a really down to an individual thing. Therefore experimenting with your working set up to find what is comfortable is the best advice, don’t worry too much about whether it would be seen as ‘perfect’. If it works for you that’s great. With that in mind, it’s wise to work at a desk/table with a reasonable chair rather than slumped on the sofa.

If you’ve found you’re missing a specific bit of equipment you usually use at work, or that you’ve got a particular problem, speak to your manager about whether this could be provided. For example, using a laptop keyboard and track pad can become problematic for some people, especially if you’re unused to it. If that’s the case look at whether you can access a laptop dock, mirror your screen to a TV/Monitor or use a full size keyboard and mouse with your laptop.

Overall though, the key factor in preventing pain associated with working at a desk is to get up and move around frequently. We’ve produced some short videos to give your ideas about easy but effective exercises to take a break from your desk <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJg4ZdnonvwabA9Fc_zrHcQ?view_as=subscriber>.

Taking some dedicated physical exercise is also a huge factor in reducing the impact of pain, and it’s great for mental health too.

* **Is it OK to work standing up?**

Yes, it’s fine to work standing up and this often works for some people. Overall though, the key point is to vary your position and avoid being in *any*one position for a sustained period.

* **I’m feeling more tense lately, what can I do to help myself?**

There are 3 key points you can use to help yourself which are:

1.       Try to take some regular physical exercise. This can help you to relax, sleep better and reduce tension and anxiety.

2.       Try out some specific exercises to help you relax. There are lots of Apps on Relaxation, Mindfulness or Yoga that can help. The Trust Physio has put some advice videos on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJg4ZdnonvwabA9Fc_zrHcQ?view_as=subscriber>

3.       Try to keep to a good routine during the day including healthy sleeping habits and good eating/drinking habits.

* **I’m a manager, is there any specific advice to help me manage staff with musculoskeletal pain as a result of changes in working practices due to Coronavirus?**

[The managers briefing pack for MSK issues](https://www.leedsandyorkpft.nhs.uk/our-services/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/04/Managers-Briefing-Pack-MSK.pdf) summarises the current best evidence about managing musculoskeletal (MSK) pain.