

# Packing on pounds – beware the sedentary lifestyle

By **Kimberly Gregorzek**

Many of my clients are living an increasingly sedentary lifestyle. The hours at the computer or behind the wheel seem to keep adding up. Along with those hours of sitting come more aches and pains. Work has to get done, and there are places we need to go, but we would like it to not be at the expense of our bodies.

There are small steps we can take that can have a big impact. First, be conscious of your sitting posture. With our focus on the task at hand, it's easy to slip into a slouch. While it will take some retraining to think about and correct your posture, there are ways to make sitting properly more comfortable and natural.

Set up your workspace to encourage a healthy sitting posture. Take the time to adjust the height of your chair and your computer, and adjust the place-

ment of your keyboard. When seated in your chair, your thighs should be parallel to the floor, with a 90-degree angle at your knees. The computer monitor should be at a height that allows you to look straight ahead, without having to tilt your head up or down.

Stack some books under the monitor if necessary.

Also, if your monitor is not centered on your workspace, turn your chair to face it, rather than turning your head or twisting your torso. The placement of the keyboard should allow for your elbows to bend at 90 degrees, so your hands fall comfortably to relieve strain on the wrists and forearms. If you use a laptop at your desk, it may be worth the investment for a separate

keyboard to be used at your workspace.

Use a lumbar support in your chair. Keep in mind that what is happening in one area of the spine affects the whole spine, and likewise for the entire body. Try





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