

Working from home, stretching and energising

Welcome to working from home. You may be a seasoned home-worker or this may be your first time. Either way there are some simple but effective things you can do to keep yourself comfortable, healthy and productive.

Poor posture can cause fatigue which can set in quickly and affect our concentration, productivity and wellbeing. When you work from home there is less need to move. This can affect the oxygen in your soft tissues, cause discomfort and affect everything you do.

Set an alarm on your phone to take a short break every 20-30 minutes. If you are working on a couch, dining room chair or at a kitchen counter you may need to take a shorter break even more frequently.

Use your break time well. Below is a list of stretching exercises to help keep you energised. You can also download an App by searching Healthy Working in the Apple and Android stores.

Note: when doing stretching exercises, always stay within your own limits and follow your doctor's advice.



Forearm stretch down

Hold your right arm out in front of you - hand facing out and your fingers pointing down. With your left hand pull downwards until you feel a stretch along the right forearm and/or wrist. Repeat for the left arm.



Forearm stretch up

Hold your right arm out in front of you - hand facing down. Place your left hand across the palm of your right hand and pull up until you feel a stretch in the forearm and/or wrist. Repeat for the left arm.



Forearm wrist stretch

Place your hands together in a prayer position. Apply gentle pressure allowing your palms to make contact and your wrists to bend back, until you feel a stretch on the back of your forearm.



Rotate fingers

With your right hand face down on your lap, rotate each finger in turn. Repeat with your left hand.



Wrist forearm stretch

With your arms hanging by your sides, bend one hand back at the wrist. Raise the arm in front of you, hold for a few seconds then slowly drop your arm to your side. Repeat with the other arm.

**Wrist stretch**

Hold both arms straight out, palms away from you. Bend your hands down until you feel a slight stretch on the back of your wrists. Hold for a few seconds then raise your hands into a flat position.

**Arms across chest**

Raise your right arm to near shoulder level. Grasp behind the right elbow with your left hand and pull the arm across your chest until you feel a stretch on the back of the right shoulder. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat with the other arm.

**Arms behind back**

Stand up. Clasp your hands behind your back then push out your chest. Stretch your shoulders backwards, pulling the shoulder blades together to feel a stretch across your upper and lower back.

**Ceiling stretch**

Stretch your right hand straight up towards the ceiling. Hold for 5 seconds. Lower your arm. Repeat with your left hand.

**Lean back**

Make sure there is plenty of room behind your chair. Put your hands behind your head and lean back in your chair. DO NOT lean so far back that your chair becomes unstable.

**Pull shoulders back**

Sitting upright in your chair (so that your back is not touching the back rest), pull your shoulders backwards until you feel a slight stretch across your chest.

**Relax back**

Move your chair back from your desk. Lean forward, resting your forearms on your knees. Relax for 5-10 seconds before returning to your normal seated position.

**Blink**

Close and open your eyes several times to relax and moisten your eyes.

**Look into the distance**

Periodically focus on an object that is at least 10' (3m) away from your desk (as this helps to work the distance muscles of your eyes).

**Roll eyes**

Roll your eyes several times, looking around the room as you do so.

**Head turn**

Slowly turn your head to the side until you feel a slight stretch in your neck muscles. Repeat, turning to the other side, remembering to move your neck slowly.

**Neck tuck**

Drop your head down onto your chest until you feel a slight stretch across the back of your neck. Hold for a few seconds then raise your head.

Remember, your health and wellbeing is the most important thing to us. This homeworking period is temporary and difficult for all of us, we are here to support you through this challenging period.