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POSTURE

# Posture & Ergonomics at Work

## Feel Better From 9 to 5

Practical tips for maintaining healthy posture throughout your workday.

**A free patient education guide from our doctors**
(630) 289-2225 · freedomwellness.llc · Hoffman Estates, IL

**Welcome**

The average office worker spends many hours a day sitting, often hunched toward a screen. Add commuting and evening phone use, and it is no wonder so many people end the day with a stiff neck, tight shoulders, and an aching lower back.

The good news: small changes to your workspace and habits can make a big difference. This guide gives you a practical, do-it-today plan.

## Why Posture Matters

Your head weighs roughly 10 to 12 pounds. As it drifts forward toward a screen, the muscles of your neck and upper back must work much harder to hold it up. Over hours, days, and years, that strain can contribute to tension, headaches, and stiffness.

Slouched sitting also changes how load is distributed through your lower back. Posture is not about being perfectly rigid; it is about avoiding prolonged positions that overload the same tissues all day.

## Set Up Your Workstation

- **Monitor:** top of screen at or slightly below eye level, about an arm's length away
- **Chair:** feet flat on the floor, knees about level with hips, lower back supported
- **Keyboard and mouse:** close to your body, elbows bent about 90 degrees, shoulders relaxed
- **Laptop users:** use a stand plus an external keyboard and mouse
- **Phone:** use a headset or speaker instead of cradling it in your neck
- **Lighting:** reduce glare so you are not leaning in to read

## The Best Posture Is Your Next Posture

Even a perfect setup will not protect you if you never move. Your body thrives on variety. Aim to change position at least every 30 to 45 minutes. Stand for phone calls, walk to a colleague instead of emailing, and refill your water bottle often.

If you have a sit-stand desk, alternate rather than standing all day. Prolonged standing has its own challenges.

## Two-Minute Desk Reset

Try this routine a few times each day:

- **Chin tucks:** gently draw your chin straight back, hold 5 seconds, repeat 10 times

- **Shoulder blade squeezes:** pinch shoulder blades together and down, hold 5 seconds, 10 times
- **Chest opener:** clasp hands behind you and lift gently, hold 20 seconds
- **Seated twist:** rotate gently each direction, hold 15 seconds
- **Stand and reach:** reach overhead and lean side to side

## When to Get Help

If you have pain that lingers after the workday, frequent headaches, numbness or tingling in your arms or hands, or stiffness that is getting worse, it is time for an evaluation. Our doctors can assess your posture, identify restricted joints and muscle imbalances, and build a plan that includes adjustments, exercises, and workstation recommendations tailored to you.

### Quick Tip

Set a recurring reminder on your phone or computer every 45 minutes labeled 'Move.' It is one of the simplest habits with one of the biggest payoffs.

### Workstation Checklist

- ☐ Screen at eye level
- ☐ Feet flat, knees near hip height
- ☐ Lower back supported
- ☐ Elbows at about 90 degrees
- ☐ No phone cradling
- ☐ Movement break every 45 minutes

## Common Questions

**Should I buy a posture corrector brace?**

Braces can serve as a short-term reminder, but strength, mobility, and movement habits produce lasting change.

**Is a standing desk better?**

It helps when used to alternate positions. The goal is variety, not standing all day.

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YOUR NEXT STEP

# Let's get you feeling your best again.

Ask about a posture assessment at your next visit, or call (630) 289-2225 to schedule.

**Book Now: (630) 289-2225**

freedomwellness.llc/book

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