

Interventional Pain Specialist Dr. Kaliq Chang at Atlantic Spine Center Says Too Much Sitting & Bad Posture Hurts Spine

Still Working from Home? Well, Don't Just Sit There. Move!

WEST ORANGE, NJ, UNITED STATES, August 10, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Still working from home? Well, don't just sit there. Get up and move! That's the advice from interventional [pain management](#) specialist Kaliq Chang MD, with [Atlantic Spine Center](#), who says long hours of sitting – and slouching -- in front of a computer can cause spine, back, and neck problems and deteriorate overall health.

"The tendency is to spend an inordinate amount of time sitting and leaning forward in front of a computer screen while focused on a work assignment. Oftentimes, the person working from home literally loses track of the number of hours he or she has been at the computer -- without break or significant movement of any sort," says Dr. Chang, a highly specialized team member of the Atlantic Spine Center, based in New Jersey and New York. "Remaining in a prolonged, fixed, seated position, with head pushed forward, puts undue tension on both the back and neck because it forces the natural 'S' curves of the spine out of alignment."

And studies bear out Dr. Chang's contention. In an article published in a 2022 issue of BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders (<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12891-022-05021-5>), scientists write that "prolonged poor sitting posture over time is a root cause of spinal abnormalities." Sitting takes the "physiological curvature of the spine" out of its "natural state," which is in a standing position, and "changes the tension of the body's soft tissues." Another study, this one in the Journal of Manual and Manipulative Therapy (<https://doi.org/10.1179/jmt.1995.3.3.91>), concludes that "greater forward head posture and less cervical backward bending" in the seated position is associated with an increased incidence of neck pain and more frequent visits to a health care professional.



Dr. Kaliq Chang



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Dr. Kalig Chang

“Sitting may seem relaxing, but it stresses spinal discs and back and neck muscles, eventually weakening them,” Dr. Chang says. The problem is exacerbated when a person’s sitting posture is just plain faulty; when computer work is performed while lying on a bed propped on an elbow or slouched on a couch with just a pillow as back support; or when the computer is positioned in a way that forces a person to twist to the side while working the keyboard, he adds.

In fact, some experts are calling prolonged sitting and improper posture growing public health concerns. Writing in a 2021 issue of *Biomechanics* (<https://doi.org/10.3390/biomechanics1020018>), investigators report that an “increase in lumbar muscle stiffness is presumably related to the often-preferred slump-sitting posture.” The finding “may help [in] understanding how prolonged sitting periods can increase susceptibility to common pathological conditions such as low back pain.”

Dr. Chang calls the spine “the communicative, neurological connection between brain and body. Contorting, pressuring, or placing this link into unnatural positions can result in muscle, ligament, and spinal inflammation and injuries, as well as trauma to spinal discs. The damage may be undetectable at first but can potentially lead to acute or chronic pain and stiffness; nerve compression, with numbness, tingling, and weakness in arms or legs; and even disabling conditions related to spinal deterioration.”

Interruption of the spine’s natural anatomical curvature also may promote development of lordosis, an abnormal inward curve – or swayback -- affecting the lumbar spine and sometimes the neck and often marked by pain and difficulties in movement -- or kyphosis, an excessive outward curve that may create a hunchback deformity. One type of kyphosis is directly associated with poor posture, Dr. Chang relates

Even more concerning, Dr. Chang indicates, are studies showing a causative association between excessive daily sitting and serious disease. He points to research in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* (10.7326/M14-1651) where investigators report finding “significant hazard associations” between a sedentary lifestyle and mortality from all causes, including cardiovascular disease, cancer, and type II diabetes.

An article in a 2020 issue of the *Korean Journal of Family Medicine* (10.4082/kjfm.20.0165) contends that “mean daily duration of sedentary behavior is...7.7 hours among the American adult population” and blames “increased occupational sedentary behaviors such as office work” as a major factor.

Especially for those who often “get lost in their projects” when working from home, Dr. Chang

offers these simple tips for maintaining a happy spine – and overall health:

- Every hour or hour-and-a-half, get up from the chair, stretch, walk around a bit – even go out and take a brief walk.
- Sit erect and all the way back in a supportive chair appropriate to one’s height and to the height of the work table or desk top. Place the computer screen at a comfortable eye level. Maintain feet flat on the floor or place something under them to ensure they touch a solid, flat surface. Never work while bending over a computer in your lap or while lounging on a couch or bed.
- Move the chair close into the desk. Avoid slouching (dropping shoulders and collapsing the torso) and craning the neck forward to view the computer screen. If necessary, move the computer closer so the head remains up.
- Vary your position whenever possible. Move the computer to a higher table that allows you to stand and work comfortably for a period of time. Standing puts the spine in a more natural state.
- Pretend you are at the office by maintaining a regular start-and-end schedule. Understand you do not have to work 14 hours a day in order to impress the boss.
- Build daily exercise into your day. Put exercise on your work calendar as if it is a meeting and then follow through with it.

“And, if you do experience bothersome back or neck pain that is persistent when standing, sitting, or both and continues for more than a few days, contact an orthopedic or interventional pain specialist for evaluation,” Dr. Chang advises.

Atlantic Spine Center is a nationally recognized leader for endoscopic spine surgery and pain management with several locations in NJ and NYC. www.atlanticspinecenter.com

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