

The Importance of Body Ergonomics in the Corporate Industry

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Lately, we hear a lot about the term “good posture”, “proper posture” in daily life and activities.

So the question raises is the following: “Does body ergonomics affect the corporate industry?”

Poor posture is the main cause that leads to aggravating episodes of back and neck pain. Good news are, the main causes affecting posture and ergonomics are not difficult to change.

According to Harvard Medical School, “ Good posture matters”.

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/why-good-posture-matters>

Cohen R., *et al.* (2016) Mobility and Upright Posture Are Associated with Different Aspects of Cognition in Older Adults. *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience* 8(257).

Radzevičienė, L and Kazlauskas, A. (2016) Posture Disorders and their Causes in Rural School Pupils. *Social Welfare Interdisciplinary Approach*, 6(1) p. 118-125.

Sitting in an office chair can cause back pain, one of the most common work-related injuries. People who sit most of the day, are at high risk for a non-accidental back injury.

Another very interesting study showed that Posture and Emotions are directly Correlated.

For Example: confident, happy and optimistic individuals, tend to open and expand the torso.

Angry individuals tilt the head forward and shrug their shoulders forward and crossing their arms shoulder elevation and knee hyperextension.

Rosário, J. L., Diógenes, M. S. B., Mattei, R., and Leite, J. R. (2016). Angry posture. *Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies*.

Office workers suffering a massive load of stress (due to deadlines, a load of responsibilities). Stress levels sometimes lead to anger, depression and excessive anxiety. An emotional vicious circle that affects body posture.

Forward head tilt, as a result of spending excessive time in front of a screen or mobile phone, causes minimum use of thoracic muscles involved for respiratory function. As an inevitable result, this will affect the muscle endurance and proprioception due to muscle tension around the thoracic spine. Which minimizes the range of motion in the upper thoracic spine. The minimum thoracic expansion also means shorter breathing and less oxygen intake.

Han J., *et al.* (2016) Effects of forwarding head posture on forced vital capacity and respiratory muscles activity. *Journal of Physical Therapy Science*, 28(1) p. 128–131.

Corporate related back pain

As a non-accidental injury, we mean the injury that causes pain during daily activities. When sitting in an office chair (or standing) prolonged time, the body ergonomics are affected.

Educating office workers about the significance of their office environment can prevent and/or eliminate the risk of chronic injuries such as lower back pain, neck strains and carpal tunnel syndrome.

The goal of an office ergonomics programme is to educate and help workers how to adapt a better posture. Better posture minimizes the risks of lower back pain symptom, and neck pain syndrome. Body biomechanics awareness, add a big asset for office work conditions improvement.

Suggested guidelines to improve posture and body ergonomics (biomechanics).

Proper sitting position and alignment

While sitting in a chair, align shoulders and hips. Alternate sitting positions by leaning forward towards the edge of the desk in an upright position or lean back, against the office chair to unload the back muscles. Avoid crossing legs, tilting head and shrugging shoulders. Distribute body weight to the feet while standing.

Stand up and walk

Take a break every twenty minutes if possible and walk, stretch and hydrate your self. Increase the blood flow and distress your joints.

Use ergonomic office chairs and supporting pillows Very important to support the Lumbar lordosis. Even a rolled towel can be beneficial on supporting the lower back while sitting.

Adjust computer screen in order to avoid forward neck tilt and strain.

Body and posture awareness

Becoming aware of posture and ergonomics creates consciousness and a better understanding of back and neck pain prevention hence, a better daily habit adjustment.

Use strengthening and stretching exercises even during your work time Research study it was shown that both stretching and strengthening exercises were effective for the reduction of forwarding head posture.

Lee, S. and Lee, J. (2016) Effects of strengthening and stretching exercises on the forward head posture. Journal of International Academy of Physical Therapy Research, 7(2) p.1046-1050.

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