

20. Back care tips

In everyday life

our back provides the major support for the body

It sustains great load and pressure

Back pain is one of the most common problems

To prevent back pain

we should first maintain correct postures and //establish good habits and put them into practice in our daily lives

"for example, when lifting objects or assisting an elder"

"Standing, sitting and lying are the main postures in everyday life"

"When standing, the back should be straight"

The curvature of the back is affected

by the trunk leaning excessively forward or backward

They creates pressure on the spine

The chin should be tucked in slightly and shoulders relaxed

Keep the chest out and tighten the abdomen to support the waist

Both feet should bear equal weight

In order to prevent back pain

we have to pay attention to our sitting posture both at work and at home

"First, the chair must be stable and of a suitable height"

so that the feet can be placed flat on the floor

the hip and knee joints should be maintained at 90 degrees

The sitting posture must be correct

Try to sit back as much as you can against the backrest

The backrest should provide good support to the back

You can put a cushion behind the waist

for extra support

and to maintain adequate back curvature

Don't cross your legs when sitting

And it's also important to keep a correct sitting posture when performing paper work

The desk height should allow the elbows to remain at 90 degrees when working

"When using a computer, the top of the monitor should be at eye level"

When using the mouse and keyboard

there must be adequate support for the wrists

"When sleeping, lying supine or on the side should not cause back pain"

If you have a sore neck or backache when getting up after sleeping
"it could be due to bad sleeping posture, or the mattress"
or pillow that lacks support
These can put pressure on the neck and back and result in pain
The height of the pillow
must suit the normal curvature of the neck in order to give support
"When lying supine, you can put a pillow under the knees"
When lying on the side
bend the knees and use a pillow to support the knees
This allows the back to fully relax and rest
When changing from lying supine to sitting up
"bend the knees first, then turn and put your legs over the edge of the
bed"
Put both hands on the bed for leverage and sit up slowly
Never bend your back and sit up abruptly from lying supine
To prevent back pain
remember the three Don'ts :
Don't over-exert yourself to lift weights
That means do what your ability allows
and never lift any heavy weight that you can't handle
"If you need help, work with others or use assistive devices"
Don't maintain a prolonged static posture
A correct posture allows the spine to support your body weight correctly
"However, being in any particular posture for too long will also strain
the spine"
Therefore you should change postures regularly
Don't twist suddenly
The waist muscles will not be able to respond and control in time if you
twist suddenly
This can easily lead to back injury
"In conclusion, we should learn the correct way to lift"
This will greatly reduce the chance of injury
"The basic principle is to keep the back straight, tighten up the abdomen"
stand with knees bent with wide base and get as close to the object as
possible
The approaches and techniques
are similar to those for lifting and transfer shown earlier
"Use them flexibly, in everyday life!"

In everyday life the principles for lifting and transfer
can help you protect the back
and avoid injuries

Let's practise the skills we have just learned

In everyday life or at work

we sometimes have to lift heavy objects

"For example, the carer is demonstrating how to lift a sack of rice"

The principle for lifting is very simple

It's the same as what we've emphasized :

"keep the back straight, tighten up the abdomen and stand with knees bent"

"Firstly, squat down while keeping the back straight"

and get close to the object

Keep the back straight throughout the process

and propel with the lower limbs to lift the object

"If you find it too difficult, use an assistive device"

"For instance, use a trolley to carry objects"