

Working from Home



In the coming days and weeks, many people will be working from kitchen bench, dining room tables and couches – with no time to set up workstations and purchase equipment as you would at work. It is important that you are aware of your own physical well-being and take steps to avoid getting discomfort and long-term issues. Common discomfort associated with computer use are neck, shoulder, back, arm and wrist discomfort.

Here are some tips to ensure you also prioritise your own wellbeing in these quickly changing times.

- **Stretch and move**

It is simple and the BEST thing you can do to ensure that you stop tension building up and causing pain and discomfort.

Don't work for any longer than 30 minutes without stopping and stretching. Any movement that gets blood flow to your tissues will be a help. Do big body movements that move many joints – I have attached a couple of examples.

- Take short walks often – even if up and down the driveway
- Alternate between sitting and standing
 - If sitting at computer – stand up for phone calls and vice versa
- Do some house chores in small bursts
 - e.g. Hanging out washing or pulling some weeds
- Commit to a minimum of 20 or 30 minutes of exercises each day
 - Walking, home weights, martial arts, yoga, playing ball with the kids etc.
 - There is no shortage of information on the internet to help you.

- **Don't stay working in one position for too long**

You may not have any one position that is ideal but changing positions will 'spread the load' on your body and minimize muscle tension building up and causing pain.

As an example, if you're working from the dining room table – change and work standing at the kitchen bench or sitting on the couch.

If you don't have a designated stand to raise the height of your laptop find something at home as a substitute.

- **Set up examples**

Attached a few workstation set-up examples to get you started

- Laptop on the couch
 - Use this as one option but make sure you change to another working position to vary postures.
- Sitting and Standing workstations
 - If you have the luxury of a dedicated workstation at home – attached advise on sitting and standing working postures.

- **Equipment**

Where possible borrow any equipment, you can from work.

Keyboards, mouse, footstools, document holders etc.

TAKE CARE – MOVE OFTEN AND VARY YOUR WORKING POSTURES

ELBOWS UP

POSITION

1. Hands over ears – elbows pointing straight ahead (Step 1).
2. Squeeze butt muscles – lift chest and elbows as high as possible (Step 2).



STEP 1



STEP 2

Do this movement gently. Stop if any discomfort in neck or shoulders.

Make sure:

- Keep elbows facing forward throughout the movement – don't let them drift outwards.
- Keep butt squeezed throughout movement.

Breathing:

- Breathe in at Step 1. Breathe out as lift elbows up (Step 2).

It is good for:

- Upper and lower back strength.
- Opening chest after forward postures.
- Shoulder mobility.

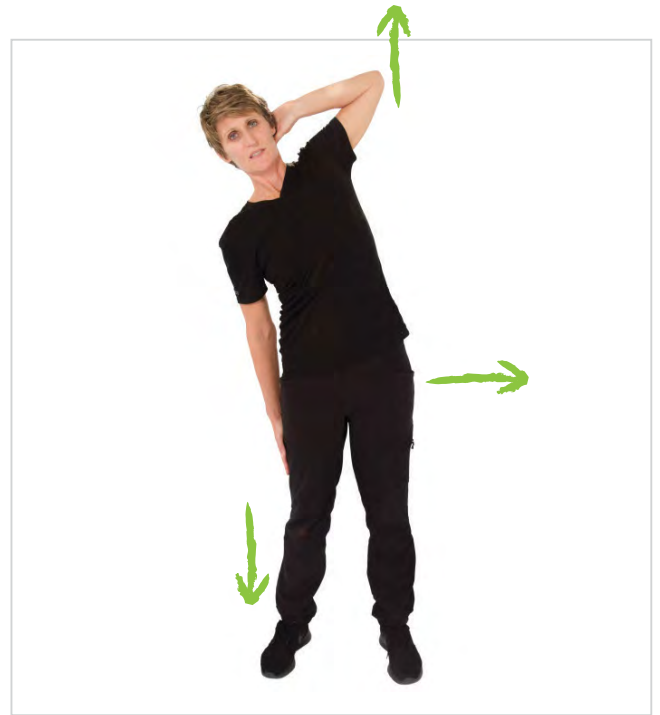
SIDE TO SIDE

POSITION

1. Feet shoulder width apart.
2. Right arm by side. Left hand behind head – open elbow wide (Step 1).
3. Push hips to the left – right hand down leg and left elbow up to ceiling (Step 2).
4. Hold for 5 seconds and breathe in to the left side.
5. Repeat with opposite side.



STEP 1



STEP 2

Make sure:

- Hips face straight ahead (don't twist).
- Top elbow as wide as possible - bring forward if any discomfort.

Breathing:

- Breathe out as slide arm down leg. Breathe in as hold. Breathe out as return.

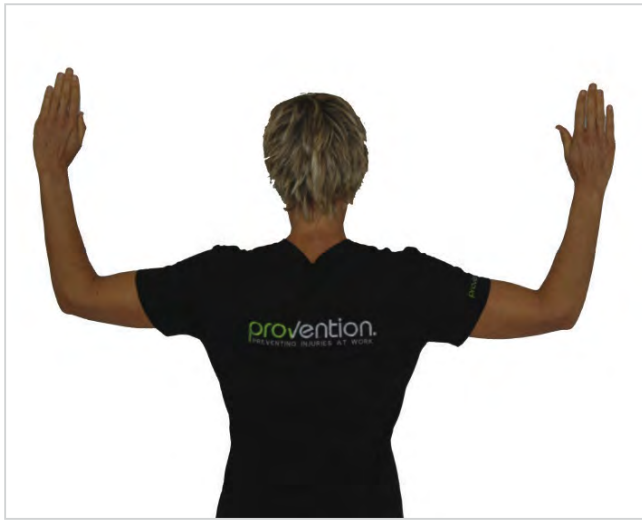
It is good for:

- Mobility and relaxation lower back.
- Opening chest and ribs.
- Shoulder mobility.

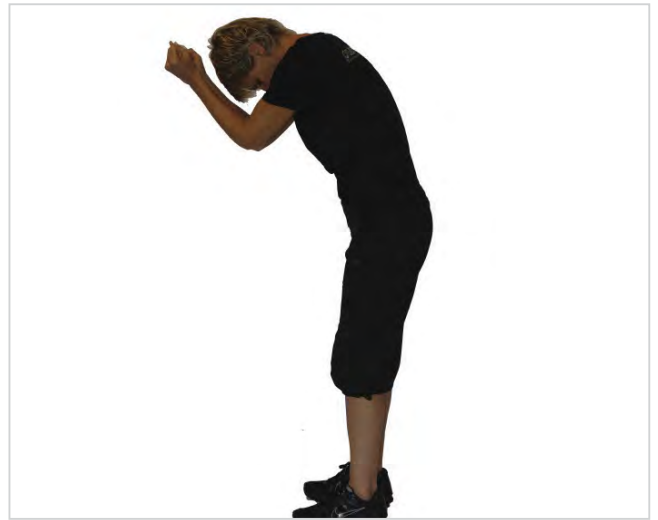
PEC DECK

POSITION

1. Feet shoulder width apart.
2. Shoulders and elbows 90 degrees (Step 1).
3. Look down to navel - sink chest in –bring elbows together (Step 2).
4. Return to upright – open chest – squeeze shoulder blades together (Step1).



STEP 1



STEP 2

Make sure:

- Step 1:
 - Don't arch your lower back as you bring your arms back; only squeeze your shoulder blades together.
- Step 2:
 - Cave chest in and make shoulder blades as round as possible.
 - Eyes look down to navel.
 - Butt back with weight in heels.

Breathing:

- Breathe out bring elbows together (Step 2), breathe in as hold, breathe out as stand upright and squeeze shoulder blades together (Step 1).

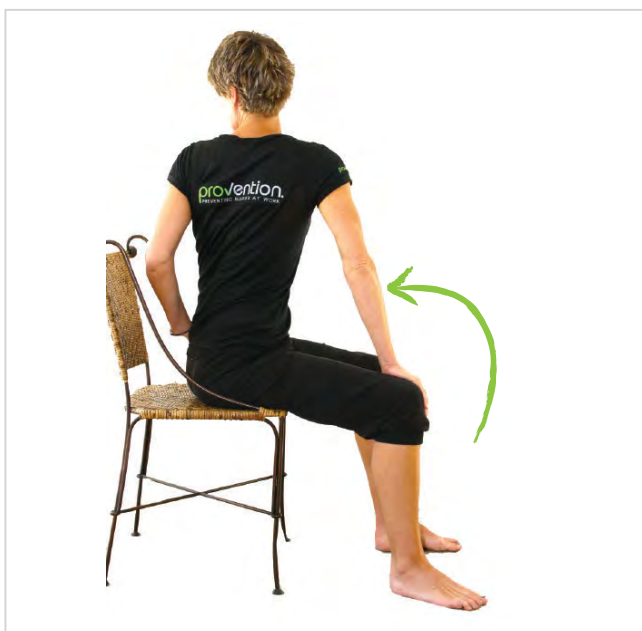
It is good for:

- Mobility chest, upper back and shoulders.
- Relaxation chest and upper back.

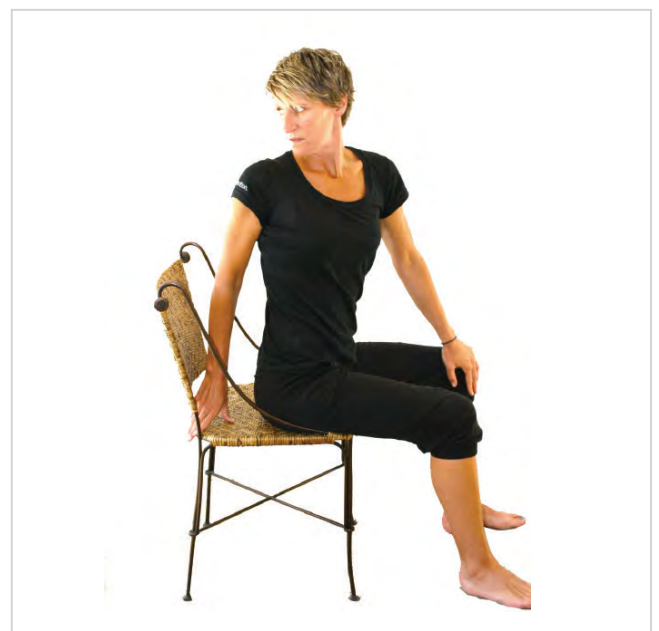
CHAIR TWIST

POSITION

1. Sit on edge of chair – knees shoulder width apart.
2. Twist to left (Step 1)
 - left hand to pocket.
 - right hand pushes through right knee to increase rotation.
 - get taller as twist.
3. Repeat to right (Step 2).



STEP 1



STEP 2

Make sure:

- Get taller as you twist.

Breathing:

- Breathe out as twist.

It is good for:

- Spine movement and nutrition.
- Mobility – mid and upper back.
- Opening chest.
- Relaxation through rib cage.

LAPTOP EXAMPLE

Cushion
behind back



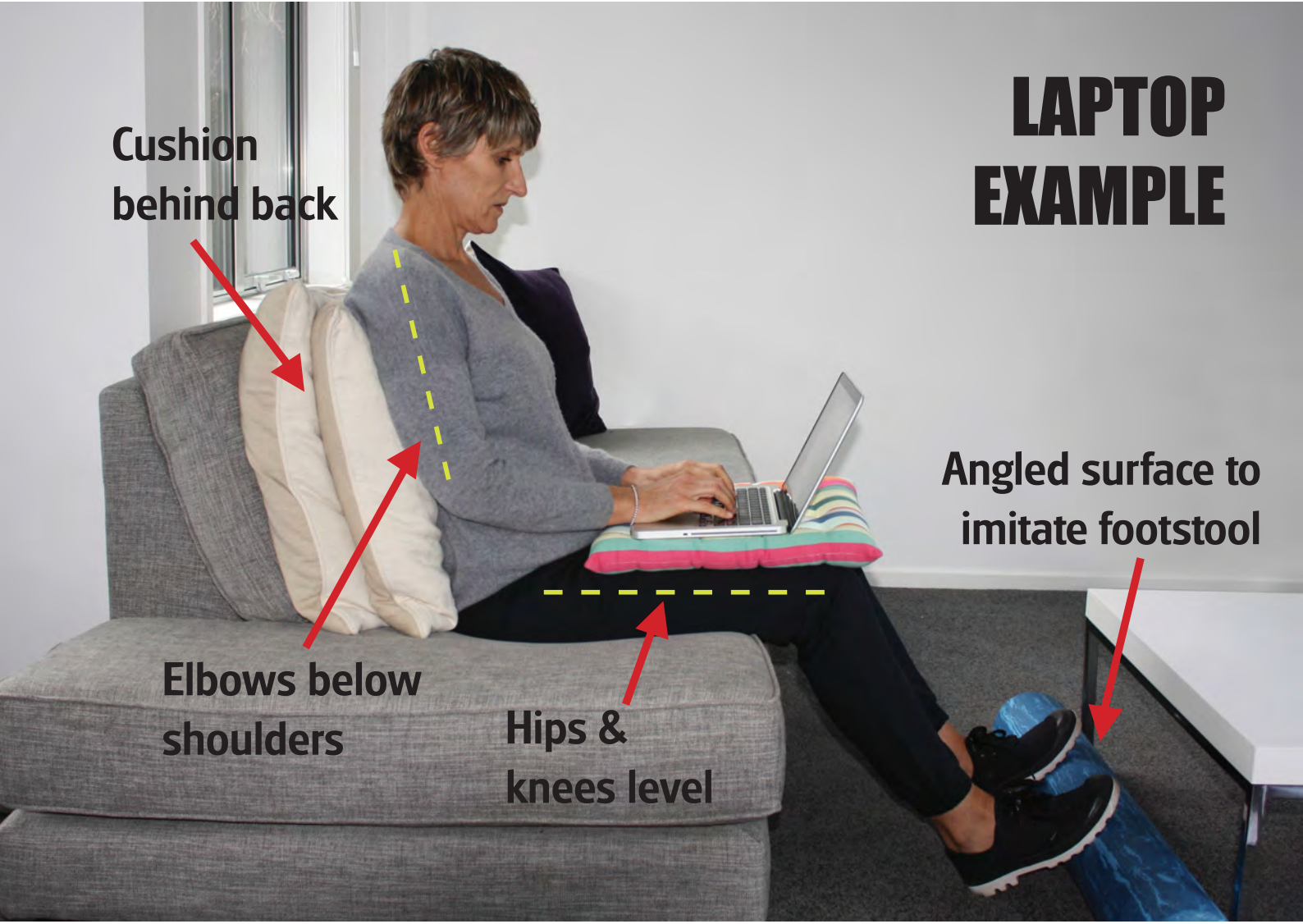
Elbows below
shoulders



Hips &
knees level



Angled surface to
imitate footstool



SITTING - WHAT IS GOING TO WORK BEST FOR YOU?

DESK

- Sufficient space to organise paperwork.

MONITOR

- Directly in front
- Arms distance away
- Eye level 10 - 30 degrees downwards

CHAIR

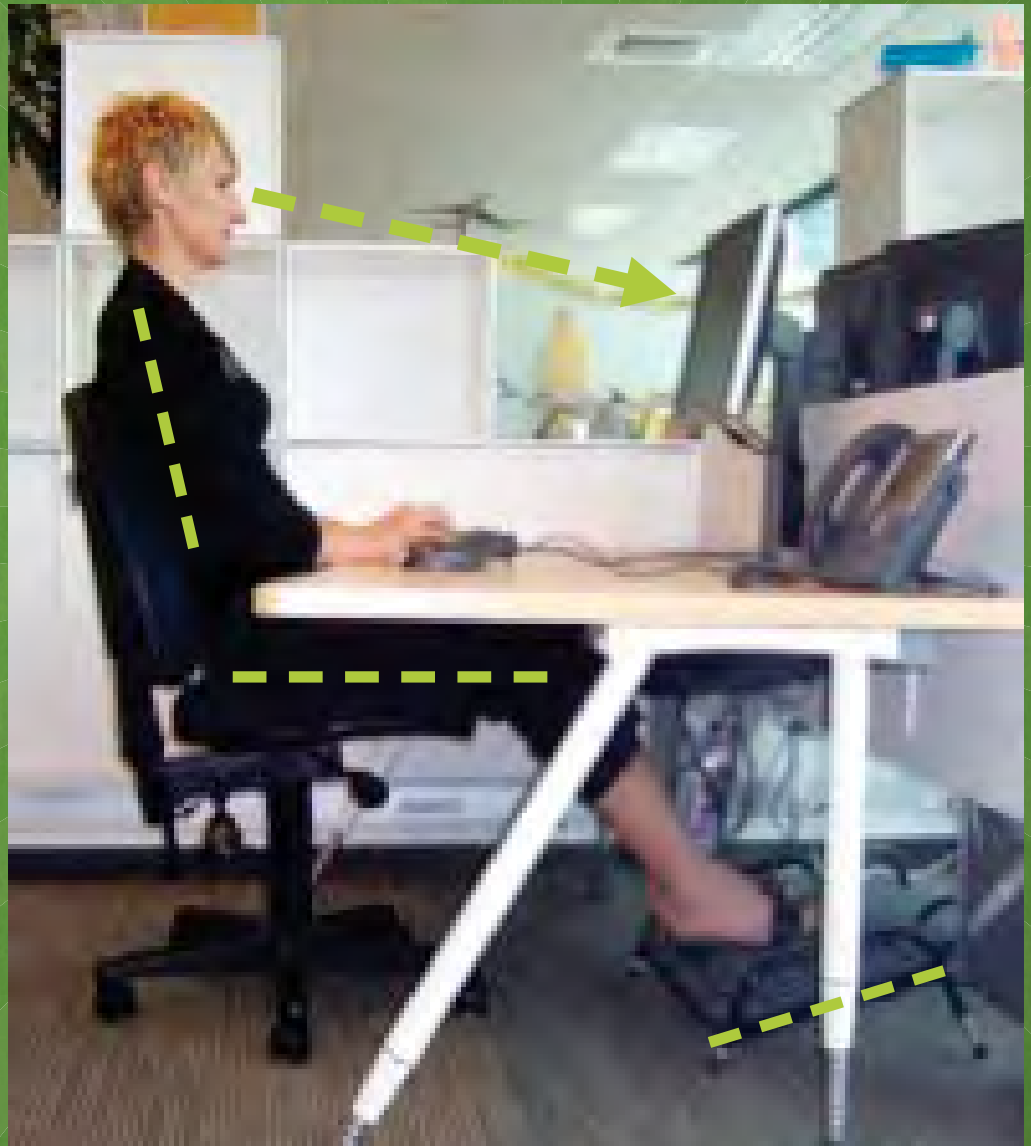
- Back rest supported by chair.
- Hips and knees level.

FOOTSTOOL

- Angled footstool.

KEYBOARD & MOUSE

- Elbows below shoulders.



STANDING - WHAT IS GOING TO WORK BEST FOR YOU?

DESK:

- level or slightly lower than elbow height.

MONITOR:

- directly in front
- eye level to top 1/3rd of monitor.

SHOES:

- supportive shoes for standing.

FOOTSTOOL:

- gives an option to alternate standing POSITION (as needed put one foot on footstool to change weight distribution).

KEYBOARD & MOUSE:

- elbows below shoulders
- wrists slightly lower than elbows.

