

Working From Home? WFH

- *by Helen Reeves, CHC Osteopath*

With the majority of the UK now working from home (WFH) for the foreseeable future, it's important to make sure your WFH set up is comfortable and works for you. Here are some tips for you to try.

Choose your space- choose a quiet space, that is ideally away from areas that you would usually associate with relaxation, such as the sofa. Having separate areas for relaxing and working will mean that when it does come to the end of the day and you want to switch off, you're able to!

Is your chair comfortable and practical?- Whether you already have a desk chair, or you're working from a kitchen chair, its easy to set up the correct sitting position.

- Try to make sure your chair is high enough so that your bottom is higher than your knees, and use a cushion underneath your sitting bones.
 - This will encourage a gentle curve (lordosis) through your lumbar spine and keep the hips open.
 - This can help reduce the risk of developing lower back pain.
- If you have a desk chair, make sure that you make use of the lumbar support on the back and try tilting the seat forwards to lift your bottom
 - This will also encourage a lumbar lordosis.
- You can even try sitting on an exercise ball so that you can keep your lumbar spine, pelvis and hips mobile, as well as activating your core muscles!

Is your screen large enough?- Many people will have found themselves working for long hours at a small laptop or tablet screen, which can lead to squinting and straining the eyes, or getting closer so that you're able to read what's on screen. If getting a new, larger monitor isn't possible or practical, try making the on screen image larger.

Ensure your screen and desk is the right height- Ergonomics is taken very seriously in most offices, so make sure your set up is comfortable.

Here are a few tips:

- If you find yourself looking down a lot at the screen, lift the screen up with books or a shoe box- ideally you should be looking straight forwards and your neck should feel neutral;

- Make sure your desk is the correct height for you- the shoulders should be relaxed and arms able to rest comfortably on the table.

Get into a routine- It may sound silly, but getting into a routine will make working from home feel easier. Try setting your alarm for a similar time that you would normally get up for work and take regular mini breaks from your home office set up, as you would in the work place.

Working in your pyjamas all day may be comfortable, but they are associated with a relaxed state, so may hinder productivity.

