

Back pain in

office

workers



Back pain in office workers



- It is very common to get back pain if you are an office worker
- Sitting for long periods is a risk factor for back pain
- This makes joints stiff and muscles tight or underused
- It is important to keep moving and stay active
- Watch your posture, remind yourself every 20 minutes
- Are you very stressed?
- Try a standing desk
- Try out yoga or pilates



Common symptoms

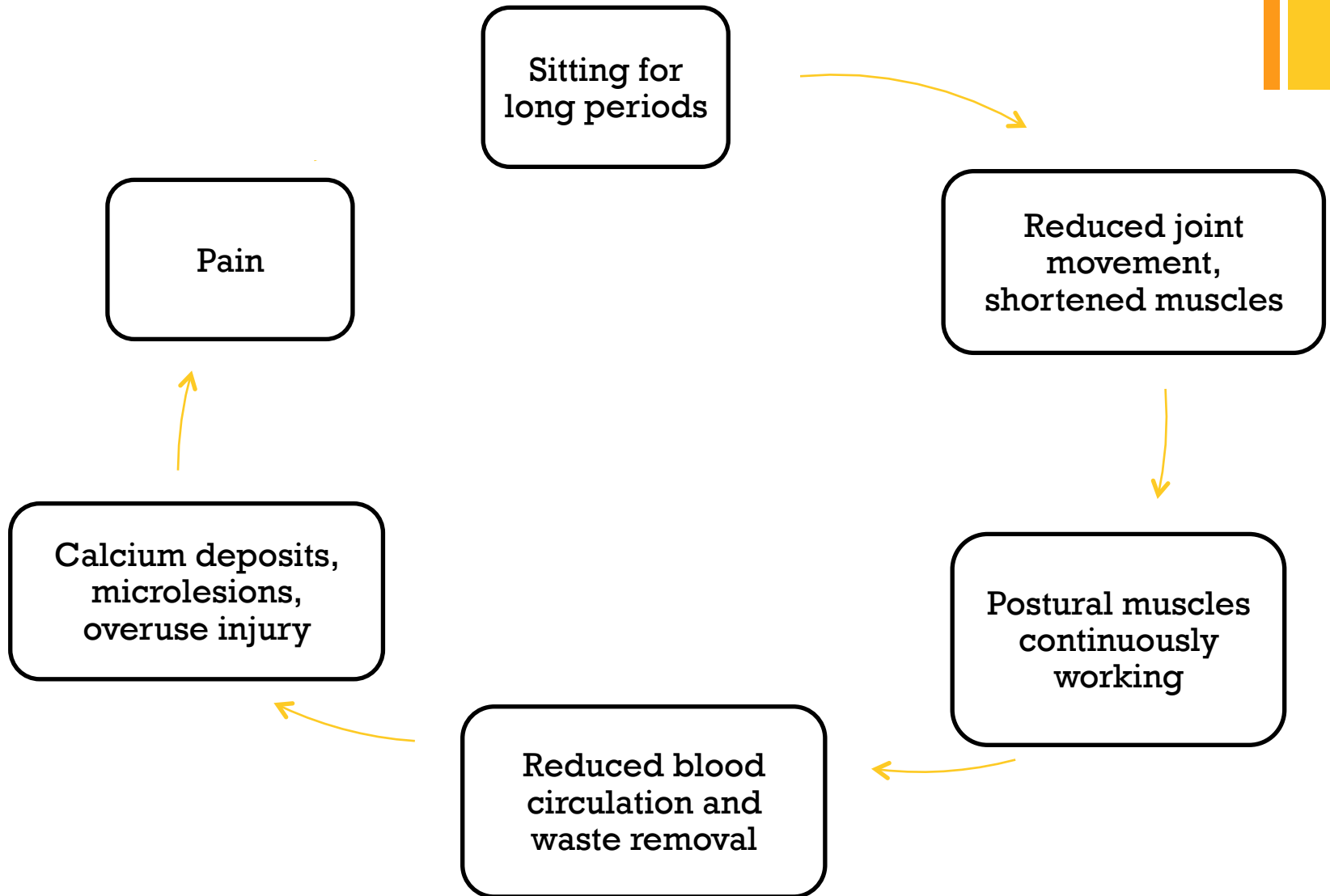
- Sharp pain in the back
- Dull ache around the low back
- Pain when bending or twisting
- Pain in the buttocks
- Deep aches
- Sudden sharp pain

Common causes (rarely only one!)

- Prolonged sitting or any other static positions
- Lack of movement
- Bad posture habits
- Stiff body parts
- Poor spinal mobility



+ How sitting gives you pain





Change your posture and workstation



- We were not designed to sit down all day
- Every 20 minutes get up and stretch
- Walk regularly at least 30 minutes a day
- Take a lunchtime exercise class
- Exercise programs can reduce back pain by up to 60%
- Look at standing desks and ergonomic equipment: [click here](#)

+ Prevention?

- Get a work station assessment
- Try sitting on a swiss ball instead of a chair
- Change your position
- Stay active, regularly stretch and walk
- Cycle to work, go for lunchtime classes
- Do not stay in one position for too long
- Keep your body hydrated





Home exercise programme



NB: Upper knee should be directly above lower knee.

Back stretch

Lie on your back, hands above your head. Bend your knees and roll them slowly to one side, keeping your feet on the floor. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 3 times on each side.



Deep Lunge

Kneel on one knee, the other foot in front. Facing forwards, lift the back knee up. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 3 times on each side.



One-leg stand (front)

Holding onto something for support if needed, bend one leg up behind you. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 3 times on each side.



Pelvic tilt

Lie down with your knees bent. Tighten your stomach muscles, flattening your back against the floor. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

- Do some exercises and stretches at home
- Stretching: Hold for 30 seconds, perform at three times a day
- Strengthening: At least 3 sets of 10 repetition 2-3 times per week
- There are many specific exercise programmes online



What does science say?

Eur Spine J
DOI 10.1007/s00586-014-3212-3

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

A prospective, cluster-randomized controlled trial of exercise program to prevent low back pain in office workers

Rattaporn Sihawong · Prawit Janwantanakul ·
Wiroj Jiamjarasrangi

- A study by Sihawong (2014) found that an exercise programme consisting of muscle stretching and endurance training is effective for back pain
- Stretching included muscles at the front of the hips
- Strengthening included muscles at the back and deep abdominals



+ What about posture?

- Slouching over a desk for long hours is not healthy
- Look at these resources for tips and stretches
- Exercise your spine by twisting, leaning and bending

- [7 Steps to better posture](#)

- [Desk exercises here](#)

- [The art of sitting](#)



+ References



- Sihawong R, Janwantanakul P, Jiamjarasrangsi W (2014) A prospective, cluster-randomized controlled trial of exercise program to prevent low back pain in office workers. Eur Spine J. DOI 10.1007/s00586-014-3212-3