

## MAINTAINING GOOD BACK HEALTH

Your back health is something that needs to be nurtured and maintained every day. If you follow these suggestions, you can help prevent back pain or injury.



### NO SLOUCHING

Poor posture will increase your risk of back injury. Having your shoulders located in front of your hips will cause you many problems. Slouching in your chair, driving hunched over and standing incorrectly causes misalignment of your spine and increases your risk for back injury.

### WATER, WATER AND MORE WATER

Enough water keeps us fluid, rather than stiff. Drinking plenty of water enhances the height of intervertebral discs, keeping them the healthy shock absorbers they are.

### FIT IN SOME FITNESS

Exercise and activity keep the muscles of the spine strong. The most important muscles to strengthen to avoid back pain are the abdominals. Include stretching in your fitness program to avoid stiffness.

### MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

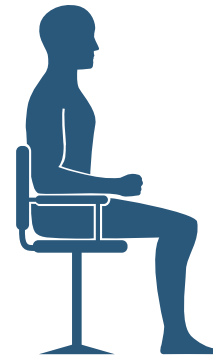
Maintaining a healthy weight is generally an excellent way to prevent all kinds of diseases and discomforts. For the spine, being active helps one avoid compression and loading of the intervertebral discs, prevents postural abnormalities, such as anterior pelvic tilt, and interrupts a sedentary lifestyle.

### SLEEP WELL

Finding a sleeping position that works for you can help you avoid placing unnecessary strains on your back or neck.

- Use a suitable support system – a mattress and pillow, not a couch or recliner
- Avoid sleeping on stomach
- Sleep on side (pillow between legs) or back (pillow under knees)

### Sitting Properly



- Feet flat on floor
- Don't cross legs — ankles in front of knees
- Keep a small gap between back of knees and front of seat
- Knees at or below level of hips
- Adjust backrest of your chair to support low and midback
- Relax shoulders and keep forearms parallel to ground
- Avoid sitting in same position for long periods of time