



# Back Pain Guide

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## How to Protect Your Lower Back with Better Ergonomics

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Practical Tips for a  
Pain-Free Spine

Back Pain Doesn't Have to Be a Part of Your Day  
—Make Simple Ergonomic Changes That Work!



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01

# Introduction

Why Ergonomics Matter  
for Your Lower Back



# Why Ergonomics Matter for Your Lower Back

Does your lower back ache after a long workday? Poor posture, prolonged sitting, and an improper workstation setup can put constant stress on your spine. Over time, these everyday habits can lead to **stiffness, discomfort, and persistent back pain** that interferes with work and daily life.

## Why You Shouldn't Ignore It

Small aches today can turn into bigger issues down the road. Poor ergonomics and limited movement can lead to **muscle imbalances, chronic stiffness, and even long-term spinal conditions**—limiting your freedom and enjoyment in daily activities.

## The Good news?

Simple changes to your workspace and incorporating regular movement habits into your day can dramatically **reduce discomfort, improve your posture, and keep your spine healthy** for the long haul.

### This guide covers:

- ✓ The best workstation setup for spinal health
- ✓ Simple movement breaks to keep your back happy
- ✓ Daily habits to support long-term posture and mobility
- ✓ When to seek professional help (and what osteopathy can do for you)



02

# Workstation Setup

Is Your Desk Hurting Your  
Back?

# Is Your Desk Hurting Your Back?

Setting up your workspace correctly can prevent strain, improve posture, and reduce your risk of chronic lower back pain. Many people unknowingly create bad habits—hunching over their screens, sitting in chairs without support, or placing their keyboards too far away. Over time, these minor misalignments increase tension in the lower back, shoulders, and neck.

## Common Workstation Mistakes That Lead to Pain:



**Screen too low:** Forces you to tilt your head forward, straining your neck and upper back.



**Chair without lumbar support:** Leads to poor posture and spinal misalignment.



**Feet not flat on the floor:** Creates imbalance and hip discomfort.



**Keyboard too far away:** Encourages slouching and wrist strain.



# Workstation Set-up: Your Step-by-Step Guide

Optimise your workstation with simple adjustments to your screen, chair, and posture to reduce strain, improve comfort, and support long-term spinal health.



## Screen Position

Keep your screen at eye level to prevent neck strain. Use a laptop stand or adjustable monitor riser if needed.

Position the screen about an arm's length away.

Using multiple screens? Keep your primary screen centered, position secondary screens at the same height, and angle them slightly to reduce neck strain.



## Chair & Posture

Sit with lumbar support to maintain the spine's natural curve. If your chair lacks lumbar support, use a rolled-up towel or a lumbar cushion.

Keep feet flat on the floor (or use a footrest if needed).

Avoid crossing your legs—it can misalign your hips and contribute to back pain.



## Keyboard & Mouse

Keep them close enough so your elbows stay at a 90-degree angle.

Avoid wrist strain by using a gel wrist pad or keeping wrists neutral.



## Posture Self-Check



Are my ears, shoulders, and hips aligned?



Are my feet firmly planted on the ground?



Is my back supported?



Is my screen directly in front of me at eye level?





## Fact!

Sitting without lumbar support encourages slouching, which reduces core engagement and weakens spinal stabilizing muscles over time.



## How to Use Lumbar Support the Right Way:

Lumbar support is essential for maintaining a healthy spine curve, but not all supports are equal. Even the best lumbar cushion won't prevent pain if movement is ignored.

### How to Use Lumbar Support Properly:

#### **Choose the Right Support:**

Choose a chair with adjustable lumbar support, or use a lumbar cushion or rolled towel.

**Position It Correctly:** Place the support just above your belt line to maintain your spine's natural curve and prevent slouching.

**Check Your Posture:** If discomfort persists, reassess your seating posture and movement habits to ensure proper spinal alignment.

# Sit-to-Stand Desks: Do They Really Help?

Alternating between sitting and standing reduces lower back discomfort and improves posture. However, standing all day isn't better than sitting all day—the key is balance.

## Best Practices for Sit-to-Stand Desks:

Switch Positions every 30-60 min (i.e. sit for 45 min, stand for 15 min).

Use an anti-fatigue mat if standing for long periods.

Maintain proper desk height in both positions - your screen should still be at eye level.

Engage your core while standing to support your spine.

### **Final Tip:**

Movement beats the perfect setup every time!



## Quick Wins: Ergonomics Best Practices



Take Micro-Breaks & Move Often → Stretch, stand, or walk every 30-60 minutes.



Optimise Your Workstation → Feet flat, monitor at eye level, arms at 90°.



Listen to Your Body → Adjust posture/setup when discomfort starts — small tweaks make a big difference!



Strengthen Your Core → A strong core supports your lower back—Pilates, yoga, and core exercises help prevent back pain.

03

# Movement Breaks

Sitting Still? It Could Be Hurting  
Your Back!



# Sitting Still? It Could Be Hurting Your Back!

Long periods of sitting or standing in one position can cause stiffness, reduce circulation, and increase back pain. The solution? Move more throughout the day!

## Common Habits That Contribute to Stiffness:

- ✗ **Sitting for hours without standing**
- ✗ **Holding tension in your shoulders or lower back**
- ✗ **Moving only when discomfort sets in**



## Quick Fix:

A movement break every 30-60 minutes can reverse tension buildup and support spinal health!



# Movement Guide: Hip Hinges

## Why Hip Hinges Protect Your Lower Back

Many people bend forward using their lower back instead of their hips, which puts excessive strain on the lumbar spine. Hip hinges help train your body to bend safely, using the hips and glutes instead of the lower back.

## How to Perform a Hip Hinge

- 1 Stand with feet hip-width apart, knees slightly bent.
- 2 Place hands on your hips and push your hips back, keeping your spine neutral.
- 3 Lower your torso slightly while maintaining a straight back—you should feel a stretch in your hamstrings.
- 4 Engage your glutes and return to standing.

👉 [Click here for a YouTube demo](#)

### 💡 Pro Tip:

Use a mirror to check that your back stays neutral while hinging!







# Movement Guide: Seated Glute Stretch

## Unlock Tight Hips & Relieve Lower Back Tension

Tight hip muscles can contribute to lower back stiffness by limiting hip mobility. Stretching the glutes can relieve lower back tension and improve movement.

## How to Perform a Seated Glute Stretch

- 1** Sit upright and cross your right ankle over your left knee.
- 2** Keep your back straight and gently lean forward until you feel a stretch in your right glute.
- 3** Hold the stretch for 15-30 seconds, then switch sides.

👉 [Click here for a YouTube demo](#)

### 💡 Pro Tip:

Perform this stretch a few times daily to prevent lower back tightness from prolonged sitting!





# Movement Guide: Seated Pelvic Tilts

## Your Secret to Reducing Lower Back Stiffness

Sitting for long hours tightens the lower back and weakens core muscles, leading to poor spinal support. Seated pelvic tilts help activate deep core muscles and relieve stiffness.

## How to Perform a Seated Pelvic Tilt

- 1 Sit up tall with both feet flat on the floor.
- 2 Slowly tilt your pelvis forward, creating a slight arch in your lower back.
- 3 Then, tilt your pelvis backward, flattening your lower back slightly.
- 4 Repeat this movement 10-15 times in a slow, controlled manner.

👉 [Click here for a YouTube demo](#)

## 💡 Pro Tip:

This is an easy exercise to do at your desk—perfect for quick back relief.

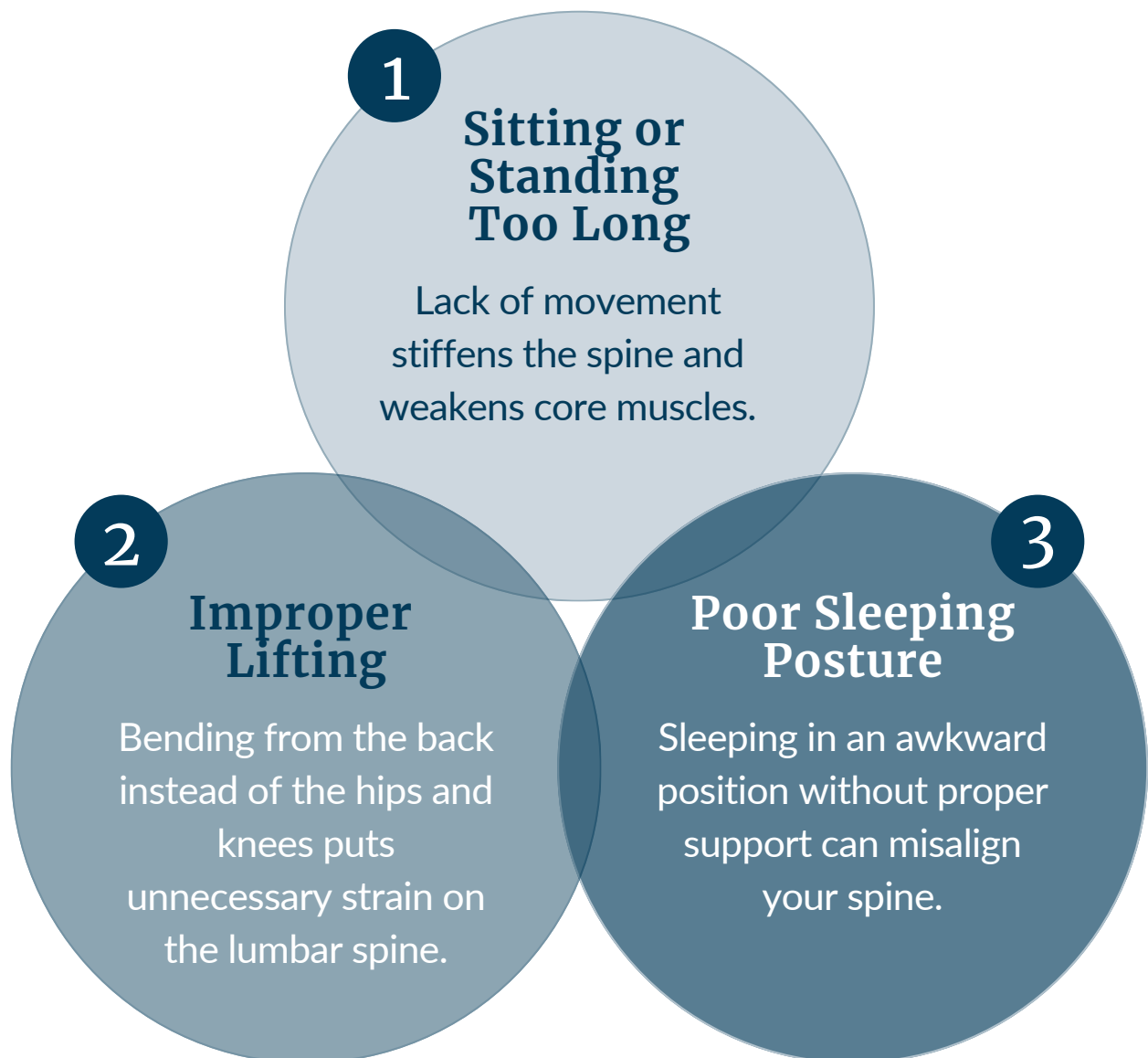
04

# Small Changes, Big Results

Daily Habits for a Healthy Back

# Small Changes, Big Results: Daily Habits for a Healthy Back

Your daily habits play a huge role in your spinal health. Even with the perfect workstation setup, the top three lifestyle factors—poor movement patterns, improper lifting, and bad sleep posture—can undo all your hard work and contribute to ongoing back pain.



🔥 **The good news?** You don't need to make drastic changes—just a few smart adjustments to your daily routine can reduce strain, improve posture, and keep your lower back feeling strong.



# Quick Wins: What You Can Do Today

Even small adjustments to your daily routine can make a huge difference in reducing strain and preventing back pain. By improving posture, movement, and lifting habits, you can protect your spine and stay pain-free for the long run.



## Final Thought

Back health isn't just about sitting—it's how you move, lift, and rest. Prioritize movement, listen to your body, and build habits that support lifelong spinal health.



Stand up and stretch every 30-60 minutes

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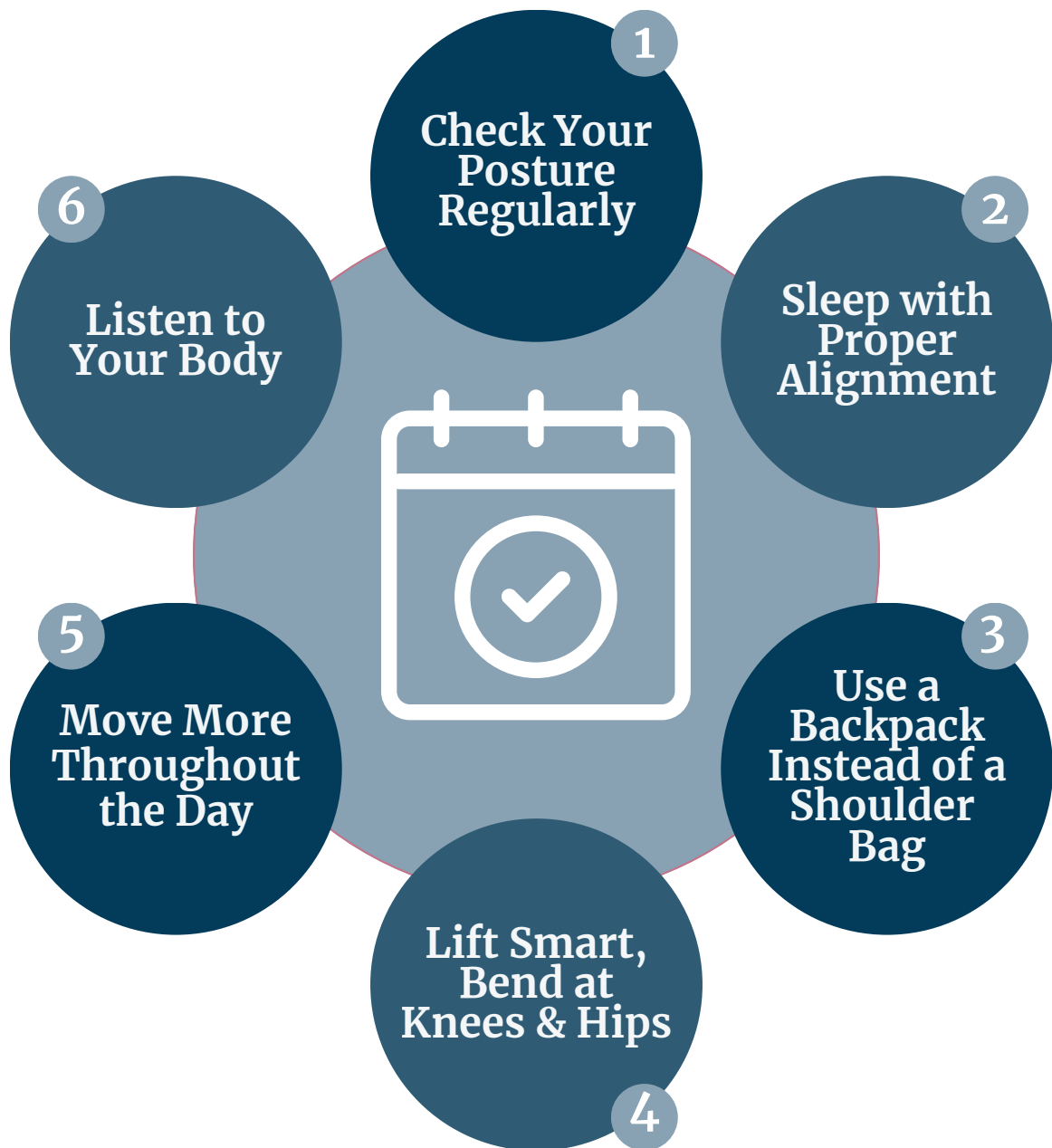
Sleep with a pillow between/under your knees for spinal alignment

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Lift smart—engage your core and use a hip hinge movement

# 6 Simple Daily Habits for a Stronger, Healthier Back



💡 **Final Thought:** Your back health isn't just about what you do at work—it's about how you move, rest, and lift every single day.

05

# When to Seek Professional Help?

Know when it's time to take action.



# When Should Your Seek Professional Help?

Sometimes, ergonomic changes and movement adjustments aren't enough to resolve persistent back pain. Many people ignore discomfort for too long, hoping it will go away—this can turn minor issues into chronic conditions.

## Signs You Should Seek Professional Help:



**Pain lasts longer than 6 weeks**, even after ergonomic adjustments.



**Pain worsens at night** or starts interfering with daily activities.



**Recurring flare-ups** despite stretching and movement breaks.



**Numbness, tingling, or weakness in the legs** (possible nerve involvement).



**THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE. IF YOU'RE CONCERNED, CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL!**





## Fact!

Your spine is designed to move freely and without pain. If your back is limiting your lifestyle, it's time to take action.

# How an Osteopath Can Help

- ✓ **Find the Root Cause:**  
We assess how your body moves to pinpoint underlying dysfunctions.
- ✓ **Hands-On Treatment:**  
Osteopathic techniques help reduce muscle tension, improve mobility, and support healing.
- ✓ **Guided Posture & Movement Education:**  
Learn how to move better and prevent future flare-ups.
- ✓ **Holistic & Individualised Care:**  
We take a whole-body approach, considering posture, movement habits, and lifestyle factors to create a personalised plan for lasting relief.

06

# Keep These Tips Within Reach

Print it, pin it, and protect your  
spine—every day





# 1-Page Summary Checklist Layout

Back health doesn't need to be complicated.  
Keep these simple reminders close to stay consistent and pain-free.



## Workstation Setup Checklist

- Monitor at eye level, arm's length away ☐
- Keyboard & mouse at elbow height, wrists neutral ☐
- Feet flat on the floor (or on a footrest) ☐
- Lumbar support positioned just above the belt line ☐
- Micro-breaks every 30-60 minutes ☐



## Daily Habits for Spinal Health:

- Lift with your legs, not your back ☐
- Check posture hourly ☐
- Sleep with proper spinal alignment ☐
- Use a backpack instead of a one-shoulder bag ☐
- Move more throughout the day ☐



## Movement Breaks (Every 30-60 Minutes)

- Hip Hinges → Protects the lower back while bending ☐
- Seated Pelvic Tilts → Reduces stiffness from prolonged sitting ☐
- Seated Glute Stretch → Releases tension in hips & lower back ☐



## When to Seek Professional Help

- Pain persists for more than 6 weeks ☐
- Pain worsens at night or interferes with daily activities ☐
- Numbness, tingling, or weakness in the legs ☐
- Recurring flare-ups despite adjustments ☐



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# About Us

Experience the Barefoot  
Difference

# Experience the Barefoot Difference

At The Barefoot Osteo, we believe that movement is medicine—and that your body is designed to move with ease, confidence, and strength.

Unlike traditional approaches that focus solely on symptom relief, we take a whole-body approach, helping you build a foundation of Mobility, Stability, and Balance so you can move freely and without pain.



**Book a session** and discover how “The Barefoot Recovery Plan” can help you regain movement freedom.



## The Barefoot Recovery Plan: A Smarter Way to Heal

- ✓ **Mobility** → Improving flexibility and range of motion for pain-free, natural movement.
- ✓ **Stability** → Building strength and control to prevent injuries and create a solid foundation.
- ✓ **Balance** → Achieving harmony in movement so your body works efficiently and with confidence.

This philosophy is designed to help you move better, feel stronger, and take control of your long-term health.

## Why Barefoot?

You may have noticed—we work barefoot. Why? Because your feet are your foundation. The way they interact with the ground impacts your posture, movement, and overall well-being. By optimising how you move from the ground up, we help create lasting change throughout your body.

## Your Next Step Toward a Healthier, Stronger You

If you're tired of pushing through pain or feeling held back by discomfort, we're here to help.