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Duration: 2 minutes and 54 seconds

When you sit for a long period of time, there's different effects that are happening throughout your body. Some of the main things that we tend to see are increased compression forces going through the spine, in particular the lumbar spine. And what this means is that there is more pressure on the discs and the joints when you've been sitting for a prolonged period of time, that can be anywhere from about two to seven hours uninterrupted, is we start to see different changes in our spinal posture.

So what tends to happen is we start to slump back in the chair. So you start to lose the curve through your spine. You start to bring your head forward. You start to bring your shoulders forward. What this results in is increased pressure on the joints and the discs in the spine, because you're sitting for a long period of time and not being active and moving around, your muscles aren't being stressed, and your muscles are not actually actively working to counter to these effects. What this means is that you can actually be more vulnerable to injury. A physiotherapist would conduct a thorough physical assessment and work together with the client to come up with a comprehensive treatment plan to help get the individual back to their favorite activities and have them feeling fantastic.

So in today's society, we know that there's numerous jobs that require sitting for long periods of time, and we can't get away from it. But the good news is that research is actually showing us that small interruptions in the sitting over the course of the day can actually counteract some of the effects, the negative effects that we're seeing. And so there are just some simple things that you can do every day, and this could be things like taking a long way around the office to the photocopier, walk over to the person's desk and ask them about the task that you're wondering about, as opposed to sending them an email, or even just taking little mini stretch breaks.

So what physiotherapists would suggest that you do is place both feet flat on the ground when you're sitting at your desk. If your feet don't touch the ground, use a phone book or a textbook to prop them up underneath you. Your knees should probably be just about in line with your hips, if not a little bit lower than your hips. Your bottom should actually be pushed back in the chair as far as it'll go, and if it doesn't reach again, if you feel like your legs are a little too short or the seat is a little too deep, try using a small cushion or a rolled up towel to actually help fill up that space. Your hands should rest just comfortably about lap height or a little bit above when you're using your keyboard and your computer screen monitor should probably fall within about the top 1/3 of your eye level gaze.

If someone is still having further difficulty incorporating some of these tips or having ongoing issues with pain because of their sitting posture, it's wise to consult a registered physiotherapist for further guidance and treatment.