

10 Ways to Reduce Pain at Work

1. **Stand and walk**

We have all heard about the [dangers of sitting too much](#), so seeking out opportunities to stand and move during your work day could literally save your life. Standing desks, walking meetings, parking further away, standing during conference calls or lunch are all strategies to sneak more movement into your workday.

2. **Fidget and stretch**

[Research](#) has indicated that even if you find yourself sitting for long periods of time, fidgeting and stretching may be protective for your health. Simple stretches and wiggles could go a long way to keeping your body feeling supple and relaxed.

3. **Ergonomics**

Simple ergonomic adjustments like having your keyboard at elbow height and your monitor at eye-level can help reduce neck, back, hand, and elbow pain.

4. **Fix your posture**

Aches and pain in your neck and back often come from slumped, forward-head sitting postures, where our back tissues get over-stretched and weak while our neck tissues get overworked and tight. Checking in on your sitting position throughout the workday to make sure you have a long, neutral spine with your head balanced over your body can help alleviate back and neck pain.

5. **Hydrate**

When we don't get enough water, the first part of our body to lose hydration is our skin, soft tissues, muscles and joints, making us feel stiff, achy, and sore. But how much water do we need to stay hydrated? A good guideline is to take your body weight in pounds, divide it by two, and that is roughly how many ounces of water we should drink daily. Although if you sweat a lot, you might need more. Remember that water-filled foods like fruits, vegetables, yogurt, and soups all add to our water intake. Plus, if you are staying hydrated, you might naturally get more steps in for all those bathroom breaks!

6. **Belly breathe**

When we let our breath drop low in our body so that our belly expands on the inhale and softens on the exhale, we stimulate our body's natural relaxation response.

7. **Practice mindfulness**

Any practice that encourages intentional, non-judgmental awareness to the present moment is a mindfulness practice. This could be done through formal meditation or through simple belly breathing awareness, or mindful eating or walking. Belly breathing and mindfulness practices promote the body's natural relaxation response, which can reduce the suffering experienced from pain.

8. **Plan for active and passive renewal**

We all need moments of renewal throughout our day. Taking breaks every 90 minutes can help to reconnect us with our bodies, releasing pain and tension patterns. Active renewal could be a quick stretch break, a short walk, or an impromptu dance party. Passive renewal could be meditation, closing your eyes for one minute, or listening to relaxing music.

9. **Adopt an anti-inflammatory lifestyle**

You can decrease inflammation and pain by eating foods such as brightly colored fruits and vegetables, getting adequate sleep, and positive stress management techniques.

10. **Seek help**

When tips 1-9 are not enough, seeking help through evidence-based pain management modalities like physical therapy, acupuncture, yoga, chiropractic care, or massage can all help reduce pain and promote healing. You can find a full list of [these providers](#) across the state of Minnesota.

