



Top Reasons Why Back Pain Is Limiting Your LifeStyle

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Type of work you do:

Say you have a desk job and your work involves a lot of time sitting and on the computer. Over time your eyes will start to fatigue and when that happens people will tend to squint in an effort to see the screen better. Soon after the head will come forward creating a forward head position, putting stress through the neck and shoulders. Over time if this continues, I've seen people develop pain in either the neck, shoulders, lower back or all these areas.

Solution: every 30-45 mins. take a break from the computer. That means getting up, stretch your back, chest and shoulders. If you are able to, take a walk outside to allow your **eyes to relax** from the restricted position they have been in from looking at the computer. Since many may not be able to walk outside, then you can look out a window if possible or just close them for 1-2 mins. There are 2 stretches I find helpful:

- 1) Start with your arms extended in front of you, at chest level, with fingers extended, palms together. Upon taking a breath in. Open your arms, bringing your hands out towards your sides with palms facing forward and slightly up. As you exhale bring the arms back together to the starting position.

- 2) Start with your arms in front of you, below waist level, fingers extended with palms together. Again, upon inhaling, open up your arms out to the sides, lifting them over your head, extended with your palms facing each other. Then as you exhale, reverse the movement bringing your arms back down back into the starting position.

Doing these stretches, 5-7 reps, a few times throughout the work day can help in countering the flexed trunk and body position that sitting extended periods can bring.

The way you walk can cause back pain:

During walking a force is created when the foot hits the ground and moves through the body. As soon as your heel strikes the ground a force is created, and it travels up along the outside part of the leg into the lower back. It then crosses to the opposite side of the lower back and heads up into the shoulder area where the energy either moves through the arm, the neck or both. The force created is anywhere from 1.2 to 1.5 times your body wt., and this happens on every step you take. It's worth noting that the lower back is where most all the energy crosses through. So imagine if you have immobility or tight places from previous injuries, shoe wear, or type of work, anywhere along the force path, be it at the ankles, knees, shoulders or neck, then other parts of your body has to compensate for the lack of movement and many times it is the lower back that gets taxed more than normal.

Solution: Make sure you have good mobility in the joints and muscles where walking starts which is the feet and ankles. These exercises are helpful.

- 1) Ankle pumps – point the toes and down and away from you, then bring the foot and toes up towards your head. 10-15 reps, 2-3 times a day.
- 2) Ankle circles – move the foot in a circular fashion for the required number of reps. Then repeat in the opposite direction. Make sure to avoid excess movement in the lower leg. 10-15 reps, 1-2 times a day.
- 3) Foot mobilization with a tennis/lacrosse ball - Roll the bottom of the foot over a tennis ball or if you require something firmer then you can use a lacrosse ball. Perform slow and deliberate. Perform up to 2 mins.
- 4) Posterior tibialis/calf mobilization with foam roll – foam roll the area along the lower calf, making sure to hit the lateral aspect of lower leg. Perform up to 2 mins.

Daily Stress Management:

There are different stresses that one can experience on a daily basis. These can be in the form of emotional, physical (work or exercise), mental stress. Most of the time our bodies are able to cope and handle the stresses brought about in everyday life. What is important to note is that if we don't allow ourselves to de-stress, then we can run the risk of letting these stresses stack and compound on each other creating other issues which often times is in the form of pain. I've seen this type of pain carried in the lower back and in the neck region.

Solution: One simple way that I have found to relieve stress is to perform slow deep breathing. What this does is when you exhale slowly, you stimulate the Vagus nerve (cranial nerve X) which is responsible for the parasympathetic nervous system. This part of the nervous system allows you to rest, digest and relax. There are many ways to perform this but this is one of the easiest.

Slow deep breathing - In a seated or standing position, slowly inhale through the nose at least 3 secs., pause, then exhale through pursed lips. The key is to extend the exhale time ≥ 5 secs. Aim for an exhale time that doubles that of your inhale time. So if it takes you 3 secs. to breathe in, then it should take you 6 secs. to breathe out. Perform a few mins. a few times a day.

Get the help you need to implement these steps and make real progress in keeping pain from limiting your movement and restricting your workouts. Visit me at

www.TaasTraining.com

Thank you!

Randy Ramos