

# 10 TIPS FOR DESKWORKERS

Where evidence-based Physiotherapy  
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ALO Physiotherapy Clinic Leading edge  
Physiotherapy in Harley Street



# DRINK PLENTY OF WATER

Water is vital for so many key bodily functions, but many people forget to drink enough. Staying well hydrated helps with focus and attention. It is important for joint lubrication and ensuring our organs function well. It's great for lovely looking skin too. To know if you are hydrated, check your urine colour – it should be pale yellow.

Keep a large bottle near your desk and sip away.



# MOVE EVERY 30 MINUTES

This boosts your mood and energy if you are feeling sluggish. Moving frequently can reduce risks of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity and some forms of cancer.

Research has shown that moving a little and often through the day has extra benefits beyond what can be achieved by doing exercise. Standing up and moving will also increase concentration and alertness, as well as off-loading the forces placed on joints. Think about all the tasks you have to do at work. Could you do any of these in a standing position or whilst walking?



# SET UP YOUR DESK WELL

Having your desk set up well can minimise strain on the joints and supportive muscles around your neck and back. Adjusting your screen height can increase the comfort in your spine and prevent headaches. Have a look at **this checklist**.

Request support from your employer if you are unsure.



# REST YOUR MIND

Work can place an enormous strain on our brains, so it's vital to take frequent short breaks. One research study showed that surgeons performed better when they took frequent breaks for a few minutes. I am sure you will see the benefits too.





# LOOK AWAY FROM YOUR SCREEN/ **CLOSE YOUR EYES**

When focusing on a screen, the amount of moisture in your eyes may reduce, and you will blink much less often.

This may cause dry and uncomfortable eyes.

Looking away from the screen can prevent eye strain, dryness and headaches.

Eye specialists recommend the “20-20-20 rule”. At least every 20 minutes, take a 20-second break and look at something 6 metres (20 feet) away.



# CONSIDER USING A STANDING DESK

**Current Guidance**, commissioned by Public Health England, recommends standing or doing light activity for 2 hours during the working day. This can be tough to achieve without a standing desk, so it may be worth considering if this is an option for you. If you do start using a standing desk, build up the time gradually, to avoid discomfort.



# ENCOURAGE YOUR COLLEAGUES TO BE MORE ACTIVE

One of the most powerful influences on our behaviour is the people we spend our time with. If your colleagues (especially your boss) never move whilst they are at work, you are going to find it very difficult.

So discuss this with your colleagues and encourage your boss to set a good example for the team.





# SET REMINDERS

Another barrier to implementing healthy practices is the simple thing of remembering to do it. A timer can help. Or try a piece of software specifically designed to help with this.

I invented '**Little Nudge**' software especially for this purpose.



# IDENTIFY PERSONALISED EXERCISES FOR YOU

General exercises will help you and you will get extra benefit from exercises which are bespoke for your needs and unique challenges.

Just like daily teeth cleaning keeps your mouth healthy, a daily routine of exercises, will keep your joints, muscles and mind healthy.



# SEE A PHYSIOTHERAPIST

A physiotherapist will be able to help guide you towards specific exercises which will address any postural muscle imbalances or areas of tightness.

This is so helpful for preventing aches and pains which can result from prolonged desk work and will enable you to work and move more effectively.



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

André de Oliveira

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André is a chartered physiotherapist and the Director of ALO Physiotherapy Clinic on Harley Street. He specializes in treatment for back, neck and knee pain. He thrives on the strong belief that as the history of our lives becomes our biology, treating any condition holistically is the way forward for effective rehabilitation. He also has a keen interest in sports.

André is originally from Brazil where he obtained his first degree in Sport Science. His drive for achievement then led him to secure an honours degree in Physiotherapy at the University Of East London (UEL) in 1998. He has worked at many of the leading hospitals in London, including the Royal London Hospital and Northwick Park where he has obtained extensive clinical experience in the areas of orthopaedics, elderly care, sports injuries and post-surgical care.



One of André's passions is furthering advancements within physiotherapy and as such he founded Little Nudge (software that reminds people when to take breaks, perform quick and simple exercises) which is in its final trial stages at a large medical insurers, he is also becoming increasingly involved with the physiotherapy regulatory bodies and was the first physiotherapist to bring Human Tecar Therapy technology to the UK.



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