



Static Postures at Workplace Cause Host of Health Problems

Office workers today spend many more hours at work, compared to their counterparts from a decade or more ago, and most of these hours in the office are spent working on the computer or laptop. Remaining seated at the workstation for long periods of time – or static postures – cause strain to the body, leading to fatigue, muscle strain and even spinal and skeletal injuries over time, finds the 'Keep Moving' study conducted by Godrej Interio. The firm carried out a study of nearly 1,000 employees across 70-odd companies like Tata Consultancy Services, ICICI Bank and State Bank of India, with the objective of finding out the effect of static postures on the health of office-goers. The target age group was between 20-50. Brinda Dasgupta brings you the main findings from the survey:

6 in 10 employees remain physically inactive during working hours

- 64% employees spend almost 9 hours at the desk, in meetings and in conferences 
- 68% employees spend 6 hours at their workstations, working continuously
- 75% employees spend 2 hours in long conferences everyday
- Office workers in the 46-50 YEARS age group put in the longest hours: up to 10.5 hours per day; out of which almost 57% of their working day (6 hours) is spent sitting
- 60% of respondents remain physically inactive during working hours and do not exercise daily

7 in 10 employees have suffered from pain in the last six months

- 76% of respondents complained about musculoskeletal pain / discomfort in the last six months
- 44% had single-pain problems
- 56% had multiple-pain problems 
- Back, neck and knee were the worst affected by employees' sedentary lifestyles
- Employees in the age group of 31-40 years suffered the most pain
- 83% of women in the 20-25 years age group suffered from spinal pain (neck, mid-back and lower back) as compared to 17% of their male counterparts.

The Organisational Impact

Employees took 3-4 days of leave in a span of two months due to musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and pain, leading to a loss in productivity for the organisation



Proactive Measures Organisations Can Take

- 1 Integrating change in present seating systems by introducing sit-stand workstations
- 2 Providing different seating options that can be used by employees – like beanbags, bar stools, standing tables – essentially furniture that would encourage change in posture
- 3 Appointing wellness champions who can drive greater awareness about the health hazards of remaining stationary at one's desk for long periods of time