

## causes of back and neck pain in the office



- Poorly aligned desk and chair positions to cater for the particular individual at the desk
- Poor lifting techniques when lifting office files, documents, heavy parcels etc.
- Stress
- Sitting in the one position for too long

## prolonged sitting

Take a break. **Get up as often as possible** as this will help relieve tension in the muscles. Try and **take a short walk** around the office to **stretch the spine and improve the circulation**. Organise your work so that there are natural breaks throughout the day.

# PHYSIOTHERAPY

## general information

Chartered physiotherapists are health professionals allied to the medical profession and carry a university qualification. They use physical means of treatment such as joint manipulation/mobilisation techniques, electrotherapy and exercises. If you wish to consult a physiotherapist you can go directly to your local chartered physiotherapist or ask your GP to refer you. Chartered physiotherapists work in hospitals and in the community where treatment is covered under the public health service. They also work in private practice and can be contacted through the professional body or through the yellow pages.

## medical insurance

Fees for physiotherapy in private practice qualify for refund under most health insurance schemes including VHI and BUPA.

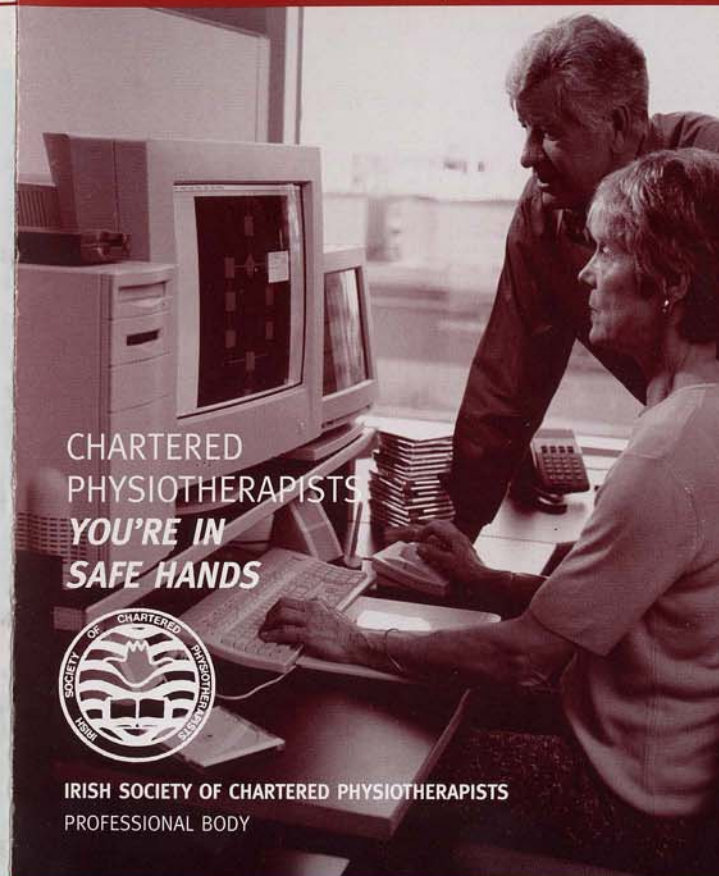


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# PHYSIOTHERAPY



CHARTERED  
PHYSIOTHERAPISTS  
YOU'RE IN  
SAFE HANDS



IRISH SOCIETY OF CHARTERED PHYSIOTHERAPISTS  
PROFESSIONAL BODY

ARE YOU FIT  
FOR THE OFFICE?  
IS THE OFFICE  
FIT FOR YOU?

With the onset of the computer age, **more people are spending a higher proportion of their day than in the past in a sitting position.** If the position is not an optimum one for the type of work and the size of the worker, problems such as **neck and back pain** and tendonitis **can occur**

## what can we do?

Chartered physiotherapists are experts in the area of musculoskeletal problems and much of their work involves prevention. In the office much advice can be given to prevent the problems associated with prolonged sitting. This leaflet is designed to give the office worker a short background into the causes and prevention of those problems



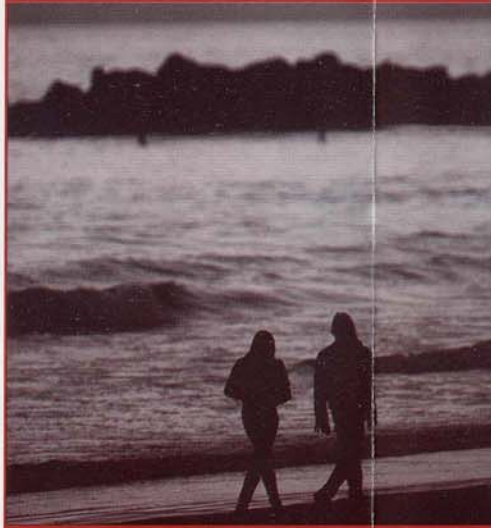
## prevention

### sitting

In order to have the **best ergonomic position** in sitting at work the following is advised:

- Adjust the height of the chair so that the elbows are about 1" above the work surface/desk
- If your feet do not reach the floor, use a foot rest to support them. Adjust the back of the seat
- Position the monitor/screen directly in front of you and approx. finger-tip distance away
- Align top of the monitor to eye level
- Use a document holder to prevent awkward bending of your neck
- Do not cup the receiver between your head and shoulder when using the telephone

*general exercise is very beneficial in reducing stress e.g. a ten minute walk four times a week*



*warning: do not exercise if it causes pain*

### lifting

In order to decrease the likelihood of causing low back pain, **the following is advised when lifting things in the office:**

- Never move anything that you think is too heavy - get help even if it takes longer
- Keep all loads as close as possible to your body while lifting and moving them
- Stand with feet shoulder- distance apart
- Keep your back straight but not necessarily vertical
- Always bend your knees and lift using the strong leg muscles
- When turning and carrying at the same time, move your feet **not** your upper body

### stress

**Exercise** (both general and specific) is **helpful in reducing stress.**

- Bend head forwards and backwards
- Side bend head to right and left
- Rotate head from right to left
- In sitting with arms folded, rotate trunk to right and left
- In sitting with arms folded, side bend your trunk to the right and left