



Health & Well-Being Toolkit  
**Working from Home**

# Working from home tips

As businesses and firms move to online and remote working the importance of human interaction becomes even more paramount. For many the adjustment to remote working may pose challenges and it is important not to underestimate the impact working from home can have on your well-being.

However, it also provides an excellent opportunity to 'reset' and restructure your day to enable you to introduce positive behaviours that can have a really beneficial impact on our mental and physical health. You may now even find the time and space to achieve all those health and well-being goals that you have always promised yourself but not been able to achieve.

In this guide, you will find useful information on adjusting to working from home, mental health, keeping your immune system healthy, nutrition and exercise. Much of the advice will also be useful for those individuals working from home or who are required to self isolate.

[There are also six accompanying podcasts which complement the information you will find in the guide.](#)

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## Adjusting to working from home





[For further information please listen to episode 1 of the health & wellbeing podcast: Working from home](#)



[Please refer to Appendix 1: Chair Yoga Exercise](#)

## Keep to routine

Although your routine is likely to have been completely changed by the introduction of remote working, it is important to keep your daily schedule as close to normal as possible so you still feel like your body clock can remain unchanged.

You will likely not need to wake up as early as normal due to your commute now being a lot shorter, however your sleep can be massively impacted by waking up at irregular times, so try to keep this constant by setting an alarm for the same time every day. If you no longer have to commute, then it can also be beneficial to go for a walk in the morning to imitate a commute so you feel like you are going to work.

It will also help you to keep your morning routine similar to normal. Try to avoid staying in pyjamas all day and still get changed into normal working clothes and get ready as you normally would. This will aid your concentration and help you get into the working mindset.

## Take regular breaks

It can be very easy to work longer hours with later finish times and longer periods without a break when you are working from home. Technology is in part to blame for this, with the ease of checking emails on your phone from bed or the dinner table. Because of this it is very important to set strict start and finish times and stick to these. If you struggle to turn your laptop off at 5pm then plan to go for a walk or do some exercise at this time to create a natural break between the working day and the evening.

It is also important to remember to take regular breaks, just as you would in the office. Take micro breaks every hour where you stand up and stretch your legs to avoid stiffness, carry on making cups of tea or taking drinks breaks and interact with your family or house mates. You will be more productive if you take regular breaks and your eyes will thank you too, as long periods of staring at a screen can cause tiredness and eye discomfort.

## Exercise

Working from home may impact the amount of structured and non-structured exercise you do.

On the other hand it also provides a great opportunity to plan and structure exercise into your day to break up any boredom or feelings of isolation.

Given the reduced distance you have to travel to work, you may see a fall in the number of steps you walk per day, along with a reduction in general movement. It is important to try and keep both of these as normal as possible and a brilliant way to do this is to start your day with a walking commute as mentioned above, if you are not self isolating. You can also carry on with your normal jogging routine, if you have one.

If you are isolating then indoor exercise will be more relevant. Why not try a morning stretching routine, a chair yoga routine or a home based exercise class.

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## Desk set up tips





[Please refer to Appendix 2: Desk set up guide](#)

## Establish a work space

When working from home it can be very easy for your mind to wander or to get distracted by different non work related tasks. For this reason, it is important to establish a comfortable and separate work space which is free of clutter and distractions and away from your sleeping area. If you know a certain piece of technology, such as a games console or a TV, is likely to distract you, try to position your workspace so it is not in view. If it is possible, set a desk space up in a room with a door you can close to ensure that you are not getting distracted by housework or family.

It is also important to ensure you have set up your desk correctly in order to avoid musculoskeletal injury and aches and pains. For more information on this, please see the desk set up page in this guide.

## Connect with others

Interacting with friends, colleagues and family is not something which has to suffer just because you are working from home. It is important to maintain social interaction with others, even if you are not present in the same place at the same time. Below are some tips on how to maintain social contact during periods of isolation:

- Consider using video/phone calls instead of emailing
- Schedule 'video coffee breaks' with colleagues where you all meet up online for a five minute chat and a break
- Set up WhatsApp groups where work based chat is avoided
- Connect with colleagues over instant messaging services
- Say hello/goodbye to colleagues as you normally would
- Video chat with friends instead of just texting them

## How to fill your free time at home

It's important when working from home that we create a routine, and that we allocate our free time to fun, relaxing or productive activities that prevent us feeling claustrophobic or isolated. This will have an overall positive impact on our mental well-being and make time spent at home far easier to cope with.

Some examples of some activities you could include in your free time include:

- Do something you've been meaning to do for ages that you haven't quite got around too – reading a book, watching a film, starting a TV series.
- Have a sort out or declutter – make the home environment as nice as possible by clearing out things you don't need any more or have been meaning to get rid of.
- Have a digital clear out – delete unused apps and photos, update software, sort through email inboxes.
- Gardening – get out in the fresh air and sort the garden ready for the spring and summer months.
- Try some new recipes, experiment with new foods or do some baking – this could be made a fun activity that includes the whole family!
- Work on your posture – make a conscious effort to be aware of your posture and make corrections where needed. This will help reduce your risk of soreness and/or MSK injury in your return to work.
- Listen to podcasts and ted talks – you could use this time to listen to something entertaining, comical or educational.

**Keep your immune  
system healthy**







[Please refer to Nutrition section for further information](#)

## Boosting our immune system

During the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus and the uncertain times ahead, it is essential that we take care of our bodies from a physical, mental and nutritional perspective, with a large focus being on keeping our immune system strong and healthy. Without an immune system, our bodies would be unable to fight off harmful substances, germs and cells that enter our body and have the potential to make us ill.

The main task of our body's immune system is to:

- Fight disease causing pathogens like bacteria, virus, parasites and fungi and remove them from our body.
- To recognise and neutralise harmful substances from the environment.
- To fight disease causing changes in the body, for example cancer cells.

## How is our immune system activated?

Activation occurs when an antigen (bacteria, virus etc) enters our body, an antigen being something our body doesn't recognise as its own. When an antigen attaches to special receptors on immune cells, it triggers a whole series of processes in the body aimed at fighting and removing it. Once the body has fought off an antigen once, the immune system stores information on how to fight it, so should you come into contact with it again, your body will be able to fight it faster and more effectively.

(Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care, 2019).

## How we can keep our immune system healthy

**Nutrition:** Various micronutrients are essential in our diet for immuno-competence, including vitamin A, C, D, E, B2, B6, B12, folic acid, iron, selenium and zinc.

Poor nutritional status can cause us to become more prone to infection, so it's important we don't allow ourselves to become deficient in any of the micronutrients listed above. Research shows that restoring any deficiencies in said micronutrients may improve our immune system function, thereby increasing our resistance to infection and supporting a faster recovery in those that are infected.

Please see below information on each micronutrient, including how much we should be consuming and what foods we can find them in.

**Vitamin A:** Important for vision, reproductive function, and normal cell reproduction.

Good sources:

- Eggs, Oily fish, Cheese, Yoghurt, Milk, Liver.
- Beta-carotene can also be turned into Vitamin A by the body. Good sources of this include:
- Yellow, Red and Green leafy vegetables (spinach, carrots, sweet potato, red pepper)
- Yellow fruits like mango, papaya and apricots

Recommended daily amount (adults aged 19–64):

- 0.7mg for men
- 0.6mg for women

**Vitamin C:** Has several important functions including:

- Protecting cells and keeping them healthy
- Maintaining healthy skin, blood vessels, bone and cartilage
- Helping with wound healing

Good sources:

- Oranges, Orange juice, Red and Green peppers, Strawberries, Blackcurrants, Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Potatoes.

Recommended daily amount:

- Adults aged 19–64 need 40mg per day – Vitamin C can't be stored in the body so we need to ensure we are getting enough in our diet each day.

**Vitamin E:** Helps to maintain healthy skin and eyes, and strengthen our bodies immune defences.

Good dietary sources:

- Plant oils (soya, corn and olive oil), nuts and seeds, wheat germ (found in cereals and cereal products)

Recommended daily amount:

- 4mg for men
- 3mg for women
- Any Vitamin E not used by the body is immediately stored to be used in the future, so we don't need to consume this everyday.

**Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin):** Riboflavin helps the production of red blood cells and is important for growth.

Good sources:

- Milk, Eggs, Fortified breakfast cereals, Rice.

Recommended daily amount (adults aged 19–64):

- 1.3mg for men
- 1.1mg for women
- Riboflavin can't be stored in the body, so you need this in your diet everyday.

**Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine):** Allows the storage and use of energy from carbohydrates and proteins. Forms haemoglobin, the part of our red blood cells that carries oxygen.

The recommended daily amounts are:

- Women – 1.2mg per day
- Men – 1.4mg per day
- You should be able to get these amounts in a normal daily diet.

Recommended daily amount (adults aged 19–64):

- 1.4mg for men
- 1.2mg for women

**Vitamin B12:** Makes red blood cells and keeps the nervous system healthy. Releases energy from food. Uses folic acid.

Good dietary sources:

- Meat, Salmon, Cod, Milk, Cheese, Eggs

Recommended daily amount (adults aged 19–64):

- 1.5 micrograms – micrograms are 1000 times smaller than milligrams (mg)



[Please refer to  
Exercise section for  
further information](#)

**Folate/Folic acid:** Folate is a B vitamin found in many foods that helps with the formation of healthy red blood cells.

Good dietary sources:

- Broccoli, Brussel sprouts, Liver (avoid in pregnancy), Leafy green vegetables (e.g. cabbage and spinach), Peas, Chickpeas, Breakfast cereals fortified with folic acid.
- Folic acid is the man-made version of folate.

Recommended daily amount (adults aged 19–64):

- 200 micrograms – micrograms are 1000 times smaller than milligrams (mg)

**Iron:** Important in making our red blood cells, that have the essential job of transports oxygen around our body.

Good dietary sources:

- Liver (avoid in pregnancy), meat, beans, nuts, dried fruits, whole grains (e.g. brown rice), fortified breakfast cereals, soy bean flour, most dark leafy green vegetables (e.g. kale and watercress).

Recommended daily amount:

- 8.7mg for men aged over 18
- 14.8mg for women aged 19–50
- 8.7mg for women aged over 50

**Selenium:** Helps our immune system function properly, as well as being important in reproduction.

Good dietary sources:

- Brazil nuts, Fish, Meat, Eggs

Recommended daily amount (adults aged 19–64):

- 0.075mg for men
- 0.06mg for women

**Zinc:** This aids in making new cells and enzymes, wound healing and progressing carbohydrates, fats and proteins in food.

Good dietary sources:

- Meat, Shellfish, Dairy products, Bread, Cereal products.

Recommended daily amount (adults aged 19–64):

- 9.5mg for men
- 7mg for women

### Physical activity

Physical activity helps to mobilise our sometimes rather sedentary white blood cells, the cells responsible for fighting infection. This mobilisation increases their flow around the body, allowing them to seek and destroy the antigen in all affected parts of the body more efficiently.

A vast amount of research has been carried out on the link between physical activity and the immune system. A review by Campbell and Turner (2018) stated that recent epidemiological studies show a physically active lifestyle can reduce the incidence of communicable (bacterial and viral) infections.

Additionally, they concluded that leading an active lifestyle is likely to be beneficial, rather than detrimental, to our immune function, which in turn has implications on health and disease in older age.

# 4 Mental health





[For further information please listen to episode 4 of the health & wellbeing podcast: Anxiety & the media](#)

## Mental health and COVID-19

It is normal to feel worried or anxious about the current COVID-19 pandemic and working from home can sometimes exacerbate this feeling of unease as you may be consuming more media, both mainstream and social, than you otherwise would.

The following tips will help you to consume media more mindfully and reduce feelings of worry and unease:

It is important to inform yourself with accurate information. Social media feeds can be filled with unhelpful and false information which can have negative effects on your health and wellbeing. For the most up to date guidance and information on the COVID-19 outbreak visit [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) or [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus). The government will also be televising daily briefings on the coronavirus pandemic at roughly 5pm every day, these are broadcast live on BBC.

If you are travelling, or have plans to travel, then visit [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) for up to date information on your destination, including updates on travel recommendations.

Twitter and Facebook can be great sources of information, but you should carefully review and question where data has been sourced from Public Health England post regular and trusted coronavirus updates on their Twitter page.

Other top tips for social media consumption include:

- Don't be afraid to mute or unfollow people that are posting unhelpful information or that you find increases your anxiety
- If constant updates are overwhelming you then turn off notifications for media outlets and only access these at certain times of the day

There are also ways to make your newsfeed more positive. Many outlets are sharing positive stories and messages, including:

- Good News Movement (Instagram, facebook)
- The Happy News (Instagram, facebook, twitter)
- Action for happiness (facebook, instagram, twitter)
- Headspace (twitter, instagram, facebook)
- Happiful Magazine (Instagram, facebook, twitter)

Stressful life events or periods can lead to a deterioration of your mental wellbeing. Stress can be described as the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them.

These pressures include mental, emotional, physiological and physical stresses placed upon the body and can be influenced by factors such as work life, home life, financial issues and relationships. It is crucial that you reach out for help if you are suffering.



[For further information please listen to episode 2 of the health & wellbeing podcast: Progressive muscle relaxation](#)

Utilise those around you, talk to your GP or contact the various services listed below for support, guidance and advice. Symptoms often overlap between mental health conditions. Common symptoms of mental health conditions could include:

- Excessive tiredness or fatigue
- Irritability, mood swings, overly emotional
- Increased nervous habits, scratching, shaking or tremors
- Poor time management
- Social withdrawal, relationship issues
- Increased reliance upon drugs, smoking or alcohol
- Inability to make quick simple decisions

## Depression

Depression is a low mood that lasts for a long time and affects your everyday life. In its mildest form, depression can mean just being in low spirits. It doesn't stop you leading your normal life but makes everything harder to do and seem less worthwhile. At its most severe, depression can be life-threatening because it can make you feel suicidal or simply give up the will to live.

## Anxiety

Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid – particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future. Anxiety is a natural human response when we perceive that we are under threat. It can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations. However, when these symptoms last for a long period of time and are over bearing then we need to access help and support.

## Stress

In order for us to cope well with stress, we must work on and build up our resilience, which is defined as 'our capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness'. It is our process of adapting well in the face of adverse circumstances, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress.

If we discover and establish effective coping mechanisms that allow us as an individual to cope better in stressful circumstances, it will reduce the toll the stress has on us both physically and mentally. It is important to practice methods and establish coping mechanisms which allow you to actively improve your state of mind. Spending a few minutes practicing methods each day will help you to improve your mood, methods include:

Practice mindfulness – Mindfulness is the psychological process of bringing one's attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present moment or put simply, the act of focussing on the here and now rather than events which have already happen or are going to happen. A good way to practice mindfulness is to utilise breathing techniques. Try this:

1. Feel your breath. Follow the sensation of your breath as you inhale and exhale.
2. Notice when your mind has wandered. Inevitably, your attention will leave the sensations of the breath and wander to other places. When you notice this return your attention to the feeling of your breath as you inhale and exhale.
3. Be kind to your wandering mind. Don't judge yourself or obsess over the content of the thoughts you find yourself lost in.



[For further information please listen to episode 3 of the health & wellbeing podcast: Five ways to wellbeing](#)

- Exercise – Do home workouts, go out for walks or runs in the open air, do some gardening.
- Journaling – write down what is troubling you as a release or write a 'to-do' list, so you feel more organised and on top of things.
- Small Mental Tasks – buy a puzzle book or download a brain training app to keep yourself occupied and also give you chance to stimulate your mind.
- Do something you enjoy
- Establish and stick to a bedtime routine

### **The five ways to well-being**

The five ways to well-being are evidence backed methods which are proven to improve your mental state. It is important we take note of the methods even though we are working from home.

Below are some useful tips on how to complete the five ways to well-being at home:

- Connect – Videocall instead of emailing colleagues, call friends and family
- Be active – Introduce a morning stretching routine, start a home based exercise routine
- Take notice – look out the window for five minutes per day focussing on different areas, notice something new
- Learn – use the opportunity of working from home to learn a new language or start a new course
- Give – connect with neighbours, friends and family and ask if they need help shopping etc

# 5 Nutrition







[For further information please listen to episode 5 of the health & wellbeing podcast: Nutrition](#)

## Nutrition

Put simply, eating more calories than you burn per day will cause you to gain weight, while eating fewer calories than you burn per day will cause you to lose weight. Generally, women need around 2000 calories a day, and men around 2500 calories. This basic principle does not change just because we are working from home.

While working from home it is normal to be moving less, and therefore burning fewer calories. Because of this we also need to think about how many calories we are consuming as it can be easy to eat too many calories and therefore put on weight. When working so close to the kitchen it can be tempting to binge eat or graze.

Below are some tips on how to moderate your calorie intake:

- Swap sugary drinks for water or squash
- Swap unhealthy snacks such as crisps or chocolate for healthier options such as a portion of fruit or small portion of nuts
- Reduce your portion size. Eg: Instead of 3 handfuls of pasta, opt for 2

- Try to have set meal times and not to snack between meals
- Serve food on smaller plates. This will automatically reduce serving size but your brain will perceive the plate as full
- Store unhealthy food, such as biscuits or chocolate, out of sight. If you are not staring at these for the whole day then temptation will be reduced

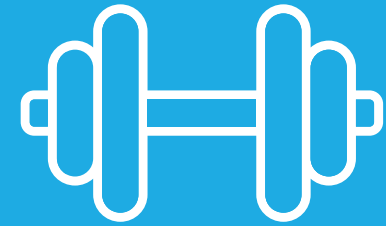
It is also important to ensure that the diet we are eating remains balanced and healthy. Eating too much of one nutrient and not enough of another, can cause adverse health outcomes and make you feel unwell and tired – as well as having a negative impact on your vital organs.

The UK Government's Eatwell Guide aims to help people understand what proportions of different food groups they need to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.

The plate is designed to show you what to eat over a whole day, rather than at each meal time. It is recommended that starchy foods and fruit and veg make up the bulk of our diet. Proteins and dairy foods are recommended in moderate amounts, while unsaturated oils are considered healthy in small amounts.

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**Exercise**





[Please refer to Appendix 1: Chair yoga stretching routine](#)

## Exercise

Exercise has even more benefits than you think. Research shows that exercise aids brain function, your musculoskeletal system, your heart, your blood vessels, and your lungs. Exercising also helps you sleep better. It staves off all manner of diseases, from Alzheimer's to diabetes. It prevents older people from falling, reduces anxiety and depression, and lowers your risk of all kinds of cancers.

When we are working remotely or self isolating it is important that we maintain our exercise levels and carry on exercising on a daily basis. If you are not self isolating then try to walk outside for at least 15 minutes per day. You can also continue your running routines and also exercise at local parks. Exercise boosts metabolism and contributes to weight loss or weight stability. These two factors significantly increase your chances of living longer. One recent study suggests that even if you have a family history of heart disease, exercise can reduce your risk. Working out can boost your mood, too.

Exercising at home is simple, below you will find simple, home exercise routines which can be done without equipment. Please exercise with caution and only if you feel able to do so. Please do not exercise if you are suffering from conditions which may be exasperated through physical activity (including heart or circulatory conditions). Ensure you are thoroughly warmed up before partaking in physical activity. If you experience pain, discomfort, light headedness, dizziness or sickness while exercising please stop and seek professional advice.

We have three simple exercise routines for you to follow, based around cardiovascular health, muscular health and flexibility:

## Cardiovascular, HIIT work out

- 30 seconds running on the spot, 1 minute rest
- 30 seconds burpees, 1 minute rest
- 30 seconds squat thrusts, 1 minute rest
- 30 seconds lunges, 1 minute rest
- 30 seconds running on the spot, 3 minute rest
- Repeat x5

## Muscular work out

For video examples of the below exercises please follow this link: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCIh5KG2II3agSEaHAbv8QbA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIh5KG2II3agSEaHAbv8QbA)

Upper body:

- Push ups – max repetitions x3
- Superman – 8 repetitions x3
- Shoulder taps – 8 repetitions x3
- Shoulder press up – 8 repetitions x3
- Door frame single arm row – 12 repetitions x3

Core:

- Leg raises – 8 repetitions x3
- Flutter kicks – 8 repetitions x3
- Reverse crunches – 8 repetitions x3
- Bicycle crunches – 8 repetitions x3
- Plank – 30 seconds x3

Lower body:

- Squats – max repetitions x3
- Glute bridges – 8 repetitions x3
- Lunge step ups – 8 repetitions x3
- Side leg raises – 8 repetitions x3

### **Recovery and Stretch**

During exercise, muscles are called upon to work. During this work, fuel is used up, waste products are created and muscle fiber structure is disrupted by multiple micro tears. Short-term recovery is crucial to maintaining and improving performance and preventing injury in all levels of training. Short-term recovery, sometimes called active recovery, includes the lower intensity cool-down phase after a tough training session as well as an entire rest day that involves low-intensity exercise like walking, stretching, yoga or other activities like pilates. Short-term recovery also requires replenishing energy and fluid lost during exercise and getting adequate sleep.

### **Muscle soreness and is there a good way to get rid of it?**

When you exercise, the subsequent contractions cause microtraumas to your muscle cells. We build more muscle when those damaged cells repair themselves. One specific type of contraction is the eccentric contraction, which happens when your muscles tense and lengthen at the same time, this is the main cause of this cellular-level trauma. For example, when you do a basic squat, your quadriceps contract and lengthen as they lower.

There are multiple ways of getting rid of DOMS, the best ways would be to produce a combination of active stretching and light exercise. Your recovery exercise should be light in comparison to the training session that made you sore; you want to get your body moving while still giving it time and energy to recover. Take a walk, go for a swim if possible or do some yoga. This facilitates the removal of waste products and the influx of fresh blood and nutrients. Massage and heat treatments, like warm baths or saunas, have also been known to help.

7 Sleep





[For further information please listen to episode 6 of the health & wellbeing podcast: Sleep](#)

## Sleep

Changes in routine, working long hours or different shift patterns, including night shifts, are often cited as reasons why we sleep poorly, however the principles of a good night's sleep remain constant whether you sleep at night or during the day. Studies show that in order for bodily systems to function optimally, 7 – 9 hours of sleep per night is advised. At first glance, this may seem unachievable, however with a few simple changes it is a target which is easily attainable.

We all know what it is like when we haven't slept well, with common symptoms of short term lack of sleep being grogginess, confusion and irritability, however if it continues, lack of sleep can affect your overall health and make you prone to serious medical conditions, such as obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes.

After several sleepless nights, the mental effects also become more serious. Your brain will fog, making it difficult to concentrate and make decisions. You'll start to feel down and may fall asleep during the day. Your risk of injury and accidents at home, work and on the road also increases.

## Benefits of sleep

**Boost your cardiovascular health** – Those who suffer from poor sleep have higher blood pressure and higher heart rates on average than those who sleep for at least 7 hours per night. This can lead to heart disease or heart attacks if left untreated.

**Boost your immune system** – Prolonged lack of sleep can impact your immune system and make you more susceptible to catching bugs and diseases, however those who report sleeping for at least 7 hours per night report fewer colds and illnesses.

**Maintain a healthy weight** – Studies have shown that regularly sleeping less than 7 hours per night can lead to weight gain. It is believed to be because sleep deprived people have lower levels of leptin, the chemical which makes you feel full.

**Prevent diabetes** – Lack of sleep can impact the way the body processes glucose which can increase your chance of developing type 2 diabetes. The same studies show that those who sleep the required amount report having more energy.

**Improve your mental state** – When people with anxiety or depression were surveyed to calculate their sleeping habits, it turned out that most of them slept for less than 6 hours a night. By changing your sleep pattern you may increase your mental wellbeing.

## How to improve your sleep

**Routine** – Maintaining a constant routine is key to a good nights sleep. You should try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day, even on your days off. Studies show that those who maintain a routine both fall asleep faster and wake up feeling more refreshed than those who do not.

**Turn the tech off** – You should aim to stop using lit screens such as mobile phones, laptops, tablets or TV's one hour before bed. The light omitted by these devices can stimulate your body and keep it awake. If you absolutely require the use of a screen then you should make use of 'night mode', a setting which reduces the amount of blue light omitted by a device.

**Peace and quiet** – You should aim to relax and wind down before calling it a night. Use methods such as mindfulness, which can be as simple as just reading a book, or other relaxation techniques to allow you to switch off. Keep the room you are in as cool, dark and quiet as possible. If you sleep during the day consider using an eye mask or ear plugs to maintain this tranquillity.

**Cut the caffeine** – Your last caffeine intake should be no later than 8 hours before you wish to go to sleep. Remember that drinks such as tea, coffee, coca-cola and energy drinks all contain caffeine, so you should consider swapping these for caffeine free alternatives. Eating a low GI diet, foods such as wholemeal rice and pasta and wholegrains and wheats, can allow you to feel more energised than a high caffeine diet.

**Adjust your meal times** – Going to bed feeling hungry or full can impact upon your sleep. Try to allow roughly one hour between eating a large meal and going to bed. If you are still hungry then eat a small snack.

# Resources



## On-line Support

There are a number of incredible evidence based resources available to help people cope during stressful or difficult times. The below apps, websites and telephone support services will help you to maintain good physical and mental health in the weeks and months ahead. The resources can be brilliantly incorporated within your wellbeing plan:

### Apps:

- Happify: improve your state of mind with mindfulness, relaxation and brain training games.
- Headspace: Guided meditation and mindfulness for a monthly fee
- Big White Wall: Get round the clock help from therapists to help you cope with stress
- distrACT: Support with suicidal or self-harming thoughts

### Telephone support:

- CALM – 0800 585858
- Samaritans – 116 123
- MIND – 0300 123 3393
- Rethink Mental Illness – 0300 5000 927

## Websites:

- [www.Mind.org.uk](http://www.Mind.org.uk)
- [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)
- [www.mhfa.org.uk](http://www.mhfa.org.uk)
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- [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4465119/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4465119/)
- [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4590612/#\\_\\_ffn\\_sectitle](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4590612/#__ffn_sectitle)
- [www.simplypsychology.org/stress-immune.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/stress-immune.html)
- [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5352117/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5352117/)

# Appendices

## Chair Yoga Sequence

### Active Breathing

1. Eyes closed
2. Seated upright, feet flat on the floor and palm rested on your thighs
3. Take a deep breath in through the nose, ensuring the diaphragm (not the chest)
4. Breathe out through the mouth.
5. Repeat 10 times

### Neck Side Flexion

1. Sat upright in chair head facing forward
2. Gently bring your ears to your shoulders
3. Repeat 5 times left and right side

### Chin Tucks

1. Sat upright in chair head facing forward
2. Tuck your chin in towards your spine creating a double chin
3. Repeat 5 times\*
4. Any sensations of nausea/dizziness stop the exercise.

### Seated Arm Stretch to lateral glides

1. Sat upright
2. Raise both arms above your head
3. Stretch as high possible like you are pushing the ceiling
4. Gently bring arms to the side
5. Glide left to right reaching as far you can on either side
6. Repeat 5 times left and right

### Seated Arm Stretch to Forward Fold

1. Both arms raised above your head
2. Back straight
3. Breathe in with your diaphragm
4. Stretch arms up
5. Breathe out
6. Gently lowering arms and bending your back bringing your head to your legs
7. Repeat 5 times

### Seated Back Twist

1. Sit on the edge of your chair, with arms out to the side
2. Bending forward and twist
3. Bringing your hand to the opposite foot (Right hand to left foot)
4. Repeat 5 times and switch to right side

### Seated Cat Camel

1. Sat upright in your chair
2. Hands resting on your legs
3. Inhale and curve your back in a C shape pushing your chest out
4. Exhale arch your back hunching forward
5. Repeat 5 times

## Chair Yoga Sequence

### Seated Chair Cross Leg

1. Sat in your chair, both feet flat on the floor
2. Cross your right leg over onto the left thigh at a 90-degree angle
3. Maintain equal weight distribution between the sitting bones
4. Maintain an upright seated position and gently lean forward
5. Hold for 5 seconds at a time
6. Repeat 5 times on each leg

### Standing Push Up

1. Standing behind your chair feet shoulder with apart
2. Both hands on the back of your chair
3. Gently push down to the chair hold 3–5 seconds
4. Gently push up
5. Repeat 5 times

### Standing Downward Dog to Upward Dog

1. Standing behind your chair feet shoulder with apart
2. Both hands holding on the back of your chair
3. Pull back away from the chair
4. Gently come towards the chair into a leaning position bring the chest out
5. Repeat 5 times

### Standing Mini Squat to Tip Toe

1. Standing behind your chair feet shoulder with apart
2. Both hands on the back of your chair
3. Back straight
4. Gently bend the knee to a squat position (as far as you feel comfortable)
5. Straighten knees and go up to tip toes
6. Repeat 5 times

### Seated Ankle Rolls

1. Sat upright in chair
2. Hands rested on your legs
3. Gently bring toes up on both legs to ceiling and roll forward to bring heels up
4. Repeat 5 times

### Active Breathing

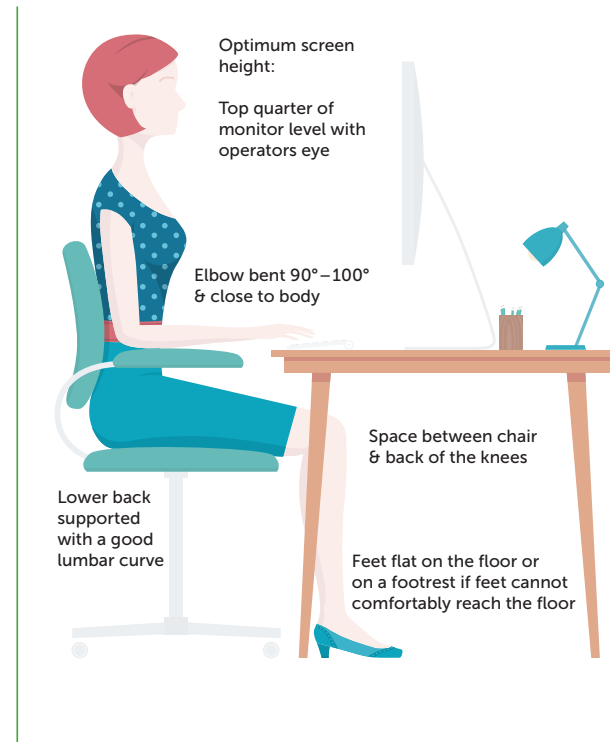
1. Eyes closed
2. Seated upright, feet flat on the floor
3. Take a deep breath in through the nose, raising hands up to the ceiling
4. Breathe out through the mouth gently lowering arms down
5. Repeat 10 times

### Happy Exercising

Disclaimer: Perform exercises within your comfortable ranges. Should any exercise cause pain, stop the exercise immediately and consult you GP.

## Ideal posture when using a computer/ writing

- **Posture:** Lengthen spine into its natural balanced position, keeping head held over the shoulders and in line with the buttocks.
- **Chair:** Tilt seat forwards or level according to comfort or medical requirement. Adjust seat height so hip joint is slightly higher than knee joint.
- **Desk height:** Middle row of the keyboard should be level with the elbow, (forearms parallel to the floor). If the desk is too low raise with desk feet, if too high use a foot stand and raise seat height. Place mouse in easy reach zone by keyboard.
- **Screen:** Should be at arms length and on eye level in front of the user (visual angle 0-21°). Position at 90° to any light source avoiding glare or reflections. Use copy holder so input data is within field of view.
- **Telephone:** If used for more than 40% of the working day consider a headset to free hands for more efficient working.
- **Space:** Create sufficient room to work especially if multitasking. Place equipment on stands or arms if necessary.
- **Movement:** Prevent static loading. Rock, change position to reduce fatigue. Place one foot in front of the other, alternate position during the day. Take breaks and vary tasks.



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