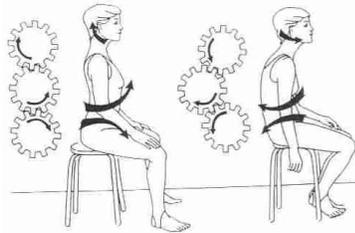




Sitting: The Root of Spinal Evil

If I could tell you the one thing that would be **guaranteed to create a back problem**, it would be the sitting posture, at least the one we typically see people assuming with the back almost in a C-curve. The spine was designed with curves in specific areas to allow it to function in specific, weight bearing ways. When we eliminate those curves, especially in the lower back, through improper sitting posture, we set into action those forces that cause **strains and sprains of the joints** in the lower back, **imbalance of the muscles** in the back and front of the lower back and even herniated discs. Have you ever wondered why, after sitting and watching a movie for two hours, it takes you a little longer to stand up straight again? That's because the flexor muscles in the front of your body have gotten tighter and the extensor muscles in your lower back have gotten stretched and weakened. In addition, **sitting creates the greatest amount of pressure within the discs** in the lower back and you combine that with a wedging of the discs' space towards the back (normally it wedges forward) and you end up with a bulging or herniated disc doing nothing more than sitting too long. (See the cog wheel model).



Solutions to this problem are simple and just take some paying attention to small details.

First - that soft couch or recliner that puts the lower back in that “comfy” position has got to go. You can't believe how many times patients state that they have no back pain all day, working and walking, only to go home, sit in the recliner and in 30 minutes can hardly get out of it. If you intend to sit, **put a small pillow in your lower back** to help maintain the normal, forward curve in your lower back. An excellent choice for at home and in the car is the **Medic Lumbar Air Support** sold at the office which allows you to easily adjust the amount of support in the lower back by blowing air in or letting air out.

Second – you must take **microbreaks**. About every thirty minutes, stand up and reach your arms over your head and alternately reach up like you are climbing up a ladder. Make sure you also mimic grasping the rungs of the ladder with your hands to stretch and work the forearms, helping to prevent carpal tunnel. This stretch can also be done sitting if you have a sturdy chair. As you do this, take deep breathes in and out slowly. Do the stretches for 30 to 60 seconds.

Third – The Brugger position: perch on the edge of the chair, push your chest forward, tuck your chin in, straighten your arms at your sides and spread your fingers with your thumb pointing back slightly. Take three deep breathes and as your exhale, puff out the air on each breath like you were blowing up a balloon.

These strategies will help you to maintain proper spinal alignment, disc pressures and muscular balance and spare the spine of abnormal stresses due to sitting. You will feel less fatigued at the end of the work day and won't be as stiff after watching the football game.

Parking Behind The Office

With the construction of the new bank next to us, there seems to be times when parking in front of the office is limited. **We have off street parking in the back of our building.** To get there, just take the first right off Sinsinawa (at the Title Loan Office) and turn right into the alley behind that building and drive right in back of our building. You can also come in from Wisconsin Ave. (Hwy 35) by turning right at the WHKS & Co Engineering building and again coming down the alley. We have four or five spaces available.

*Again, thank you for being our patient!
We appreciate you and look forward to serving you.*

David J. Weber, D.C., D.A.B.C.O.

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289 Sinsinawa Ave

East Dubuque, IL 61025

(815) 747-6548