

Maximize Your Life Newsletter

Issue # 212

Active Sitting – what is it and why should you do it?

As we continue to hyperspace into the future, technology keeps finding new ways to lower our daily levels of activity. Our day has become an accumulation of non-active events and the biggest of those non-active events is the time we spend sitting (work or hobby). A typical 8-hour workday represents one half of our waking time! For many of us, this huge chunk of our day is spent in an office environment sitting in a chair and clicking a mouse. Perhaps you have a hobby or other activity where prolonged sitting is required. If so, the following applies to you:

The chair is one of mankind's worst inventions. From a human engineering standpoint, mankind is not designed to sit. **There is actually more strain on our back when we sit than when we stand!** Also, since a chair supports our spine, we are not required to use our postural muscles - muscles that stabilize the segments of the spine that are essential to the foundation of our body. If we are not using them for 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, they will shrink and become weak, which places our spinal stability in jeopardy. Imagine what would happen to the muscles of your body if you were to lie in bed 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. They would deteriorate, and this is exactly what happens to your postural muscles when you sit in a chair! With our spinal stability in such a wobbly state, back injuries are inevitable.

Have you ever wondered why your back is so stiff after sitting for a period of time? A chair is a rigid structure, and when we sit on it, it does not allow any movement to occur in our pelvis and back. This lack of movement creates a lack of blood flow to the area so that the joints and muscles become stiff. We are finally starting to realize the detriments of sitting in a chair and how it has become a **liability to our long-term health**. This has created a paradigm shift in the way we approach sitting. We are now trying to find ways to create office environments that are an asset to our health and well being and not a liability.

'**Active Sitting**' has provided a phenomenal solution to the problems that were created with traditional passive chair sitting. As this paradigm shift changes our thinking, more and more people are sitting on **active sitting surfaces** such as FitBalls and Swiss Balls or the **FitBall Disc** (featured on the back of this newsletter). By sitting on something that is unstable, it forces us to activate our postural muscles while we sit. This prevents the postural muscles from deteriorating so that we are able to maintain strong spinal stability. Because we are able to move while we sit, our joints are never stuck in one position. **The ability to move while we sit maintains blood flow to the muscles and joints**, thereby allowing us to sit for 8 hours without back stiffness occurring.

Sitting up straight is important. Perhaps even more important than sitting posture is being able to move subtly while you sit up straight, thereby activating muscles and stimulating blood flow. The two concepts should actually go hand in hand.

As far as the **act of sitting** goes, think of it this way... how you feel at the end of the day is a by-product of 3 key factors: how long you sit, how healthy your seated posture is, and how much you move while you sit.

Speak up and educate others, *Dr. Craig*

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Featured Product – FitBall Active Sitting Disc

Who would like it?

Ideally we would all be active in our home and work environments and we would not need to worry about active sitting. But if your profession or daily activities require you to sit for long periods of time you may want to consider a Fit Ball sit disc for your office or home. Even though the level of core and back conditioning you will get is lower than traditional exercises, it will assist you in bringing some core conditioning and low back mobility into your everyday routine. As most of us find ourselves sitting more than we would like for good health, the sit disc can improve posture, strength and mobility of the core.



Additional benefits to 'Active Sitting':

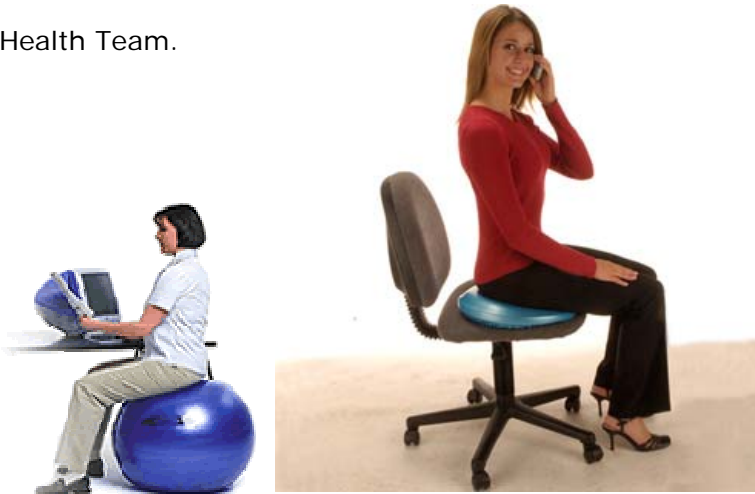
- Provides a fun, energized experience
- Strengthens core muscles of the back and abdomen
- Enhances your balance and overall relationship with gravity
- Improves circulation to the lower extremities
- Improves nourishment to the intervertebral disks
- Assists lymphatic flow
- Provides relief from back pain

The bottom line

A sitting disc is a small investment that can make a big difference to your spinal health. It is a simple tool to learn how to use and can be used in everyday life.

Where do I get one?

Please ask a member of the Maximized Health Team.



Examples of Active Sitting

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