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Health check for the mind

Stress and back pain are major contributors to long term absence from work. Many people can feel stressed when the demands of their life seem to be becoming too great for them to cope with. This ability to cope varies from person to person, but long term stress is known to be bad for our mental and physical health.

What are the signs of stress?

Physical signs - such as headaches, muscle tension or palpitations are common signs of stress. Emotional signs include temper outbursts, changes in eating habits, withdrawing from usual activities or rushing around.

Causes of stress?

Some things that happen in your life can be stressful such as changes at work, working in noisy or neglected environments, or difficulties with handling new technology. Domestic changes such as moving house or a relationship breakdown can also all attribute to stress.

How can I help myself to cope with stress?

The first step in tackling stress is to become aware that it is a problem for you. The next stage is to make a plan to take control of the causes and effects of stress. Here are some practical points to keep in mind to enable you to take control of stress.



How to beat stress

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- H**olidays - plan at least one each year with a change in surroundings.
- O**pen up - and talk, if your relationship is part of the problem.
- W**ork - is that the problem? What are your options? What aspects are stressful? Could you delegate? Could you get more support?
- T**ry to concentrate on the present - Don't dwell on the past.
- O**wn up to yourself - admit to yourself that you are feeling stressed.

- B**e realistic - about what you can achieve.
- E**at a balanced diet - eat slowly, sit down and allow half an hour.
- A**ction plans - write problems down and make a plan to deal with them.
- T**ime management - plan your time, do one thing at a time and build in breaks. Don't make too many life changes at once.

- S**et priorities - if you could only do one thing, what would it be?
- T**alk things over with your manager - or someone else you can trust.
- R**elaxation is important - Try new ways to relax - reflexology or yoga.
- E**xercise regularly - at least 20 minutes two or three times a week.
- S**ay no - and don't feel guilty about saying it.
- S**eek professional help - if you have tried these things and still your stress is still a problem then seek professional help.

The series of images below show some suggested stretches that you can do in your chair, that may help you to stay relaxed through the day.

dedicated to D.C.T.



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Adjusting the chair to suit your body.

Ignoring the adjustments on a chair is like driving in first gear for 8 hours a day. Take a few minutes to learn how to set-up and drive your chair then record the settings at the back of this book. Then you'll be set up for a more enjoyable experience at work - we promise! - and like sharing a car, if someone else has used your seat, it won't be a big deal to re-set it once you've recorded your personal combination code.

You can use the scale below to measure the correct seat height and then make a note of it along with your other chair set up measurements on the last page of this booklet.

If you want to find out more about the chair or how to look after your body and mind at work, log on to our website.

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seat height

The seat height can be adjusted by pulling up the seat height paddle. Put your weight on the seat to lower and lift your weight off to make it higher. Your knees should be lower than your hips with your thighs gently sloping downwards - this helps you to sit in a more natural upright posture.



seat depth

To adjust the seat depth press in the seat depth button, slide the seat into the desired position. Make sure your bottom is fully back into the seat, with a two to four finger gap between the back of your knees and the front of the seat, your legs now have the freedom to shift backwards and forwards.



back height

To adjust the back height, grip the back and lift up. Make sure the height is set to ensure the pronounced curvature of the backrest sits in the small of the back. You can use the inflatable pump to fine tune the amount of additional lumbar padding you may need.



arm height

Press in the button on the outside of the arm and move the arm up or down into the desired position, release the button to lock in position. Make sure your shoulders and upper arms are relaxed by your side, and your forearms are at right angles when the arm pads are just touching your forearms.



back angle

The back angle can be adjusted by turning the control - turn it clockwise to bring the back rest forwards and anti-clockwise to move it back. Ensure that the back rest is never far away from your back when you are sat in a balanced upright position.



arm width

Pull down the lever on the underside of the arm bar and slide the arm outwards. Lock the arm width into position by pulling the lever upwards. You can adjust the angle of the arm pad by pressing the button on the inside of the arm and twisting the pad into position. The arm pads can also be pushed backwards.



back recline tension

To balance the chair to suit your body weight, turn the body weight control - clockwise to increase and anti-clockwise to decrease the resistance. Make sure when the chair is unlocked that it's not too hard to recline, or too weak so that you don't feel supported. You can lock the back into position by pulling up the back lock paddle.



head rest adjustment

To adjust the head rest grip it underneath and twist forward. Ensure it's positioned to support the nape of your neck when you are sat in an upright working position. The headrest can be adjusted in height, orientation and depth accordingly.

