

Sitting Disease

Do you work or study at a desk for many hours a day? Is the couch your favorite place to spend your evenings? If yes, you may have sitting disease! In this lesson you will read *6 Tips to Prevent Sitting Disease*. You will also discuss health-related issues and work on perfecting your posture.

Classroom Challenge

Are you sitting down right now? Change your position as you work through this lesson. Stand up, lie down, jog on the spot, sit on your desk...



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. How many hours do you sit on an average day?
2. How could you add more movement to your everyday routines?
3. What modern devices do you use in order to save yourself from physical labor? (Labor is work.)
4. Is your lifestyle more sedentary than your parents' lifestyle was at your age? Explain. (Sedentary means lack of movement.)

Tip:

If someone tells you to *stay put*, they want you to stay in one place. You can still stand up, stretch, or do some jumping jacks!

B. Discuss

Read the quote below. It is a headline that was found in a magazine for runners.

"Sitting is the new smoking—even for runners." —Selene Yeager

1. What do you think the article was about?
2. Do you agree or disagree that sitting too long can be as dangerous to your health as smoking?

Reading

6 TIPS TO PREVENT SITTING DISEASE

1. *Set a timer.*

If you work at a desk, you probably sit for more than six hours a day. Set a timer every hour. Get up, stretch, and move around for about ten minutes every hour.

2. *Park far away.*

Do you commute to work or school? If yes, you probably sit for up to ten hours per day! Park far away from your workplace or school, and leave your lunch in the car so that you have to go and get it halfway through your day.

3. *Meet and move.*

Can you walk or even jog while you're in a meeting? If your meeting is online, can you stand up and talk? If you don't have meetings, choose a different time to stand, such as while reading email or while proofreading documents.

4. *Perfect your posture.*

Sitting for prolonged periods of time can affect your posture. Try not to slouch while you are at your computer. Make sure your feet are flat on the ground and your arms make an L shape. Put a reminder note near your desk that tells you to check your posture.

5. *Avoid the couch.*

Do you move from your office chair or desk to your couch? Many people spend hours every evening lounging in front of the TV. Find ways to stay active while your favorite shows are on. Stretch, do yoga, or run on the spot.

6. *Be mindful of moderation.*

Our bodies were designed to move, which means that doing one thing for too long is not good for us. This includes standing, lying down, exercising, and especially sitting. Remind yourself that you can prevent heart disease, obesity, and fatigue by keeping your body moving.

Comprehension

Read the statements below.

If the statement is true, write T beside the sentence.

If it is false, write F and correct the information.

- _____ 1. Ten minutes of exercise in a workday will prevent sitting disease.
- _____ 2. The couch is a good place to work on improving one's posture.
- _____ 3. Some people commute up to ten hours a day.
- _____ 4. Fatigue sets in when you stay in one position for too long.
- _____ 5. Running on the spot can be done in front of the television.

Did you know?

Your feet should be flat on the ground when you are seated at a desk. Use a footstool or box if you're too short. This will improve your posture!

Vocabulary Review

A. Useful Expressions

Here are some useful expressions for describing discomfort from sitting:

- I've lost the circulation in my feet.
- I have a stiff neck.
- My back is aching.
- I have terrible posture.
- My *butt* is numb.
- I have carpal tunnel syndrome.
- I need to get up and move around.
- My muscles are tense.

B. Odd One Out

Choose the word or phrase that does NOT belong in the group of related words. Can you think of another word that would belong?

- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1. a) extended | 2. a) drive | 3. a) obesity | 4. a) sit | 5. a) tiredness |
| b) slouch | b) commute | b) overweight | b) relax | b) exhaustion |
| c) prolonged | c) walk | c) posture | c) lounge | c) moderation |
| d) lengthy | d) stay | d) heaviness | d) posture | d) fatigue |

C. Vocabulary Game

Work with a partner. Take turns choosing a word from the list below and rolling a die. Follow the instructions based on the number you rolled. Give yourself a point each time you know the answer. Ask your teacher for help if you don't know if a response is correct.

Word List

- moderation
- commute
- prolonged
- posture
- slouch
- lounge
- couch potato
- fatigue
- stay put
- sedentary

Role the Die

1. Spell the word without looking.
2. Categorize the word form as it is found in the reading (adjective, verb, noun).
3. Think of a synonym.
4. Pronounce it. (Where does the stress belong?)
5. Use it in a sentence.
6. Give a definition.

Discuss

1. Which professions put people at the most risk for sitting disease?
2. What must a person do to change an unhealthy habit such as prolonged sitting?
3. How can teachers help students avoid sitting disease?
4. Are you someone who can't sit still, or are you more of a couch potato? Give examples.
5. Why do people from your generation spend more time sitting than people from previous generations did?

On the Flip Side

"Really—my favorite tip is BIC. Butt in Chair. (Or Behind in Chair. Or Backside in Chair.) Because if you do not put your time in the chair, you will not get any writing done." —Jane Yolen, writer

Why does Jane Yolen recommend BIC?

Writing

Do a little research about posture.
Create your own list about perfecting one's posture.

5 TIPS FOR PERFECTING YOUR POSTURE

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Role-Play

Get together with a partner.
Act out a scene between an employee and a new manager. The new manager is concerned that his employees have sitting disease. He /she offers tips for moving around on the job. Try to use vocabulary from the reading and useful expressions from page 3.

Classroom Challenge Check-In

1. How long did you sit during this lesson?
2. Would you want to do other lessons while standing and moving?