Are you one of the five adults who suffer with backache?

The background to this national epidemic not only to the nation but also to fellow back sufferers.

According to various sources even going back to the 80’s the department of health and social security stated that up to 25 million working days are lost through back pain. We are now in 2014 and back pain is still one of the most costly conditions to our economy and personal wellbeing.

According to the backcare charity the current healthcare costs for back pain amount to £1.6 billion per year. The healthcare costs in the private sector amount to over £500 million just on back pain every year.

It is said that over 80 per cent of people spend up to six hours a day in front of a computer, over 40 per cent of people spent between two to six hours a day watching TV.

Over 25 per cent suffer neck and back pain on a daily basis through spending increased time over smartphones, tablets or laptops.

So here are some tips that you can take to reduce the incidence of back and neck pain.
Helpful Hints for sitting at work

A Lumbar Support
Make sure your lumbar curve is well supported by your chair or you can make a lumbar support with a small rolled up towel 5-10cm which can be positioned in the small of your back.

Seat Angle

![Diagram of proper seat angle]

The seat should tilt forward and the chair to have a rocking action. Adjust the seat so that the hip joint is higher than the knee joint.

Reading
Hold your reading material vertically as opposed to leaning over it. This helps to keep your entire back straight. Resting your elbows on your desk supports your upper back.
VDU Screen Height
The top of the VDU should be level with the eyes. Where possible your screen should be in front of you. This avoids putting any strain on your neck or a shift in your seating weight bearing position.

Cause of Back Problems
The majority of us are so used to slouching forwards on our chairs, so we really do not know how to improve our sitting posture.
The intervertebral discs which are shock absorbers become compressed which can eventually lead to partial or permanent damage to our spines. By slouching forward also has the effect of pinching the discs, compresses the abdomen and ribcage affecting the circulation, breathing and impaired digestion.

**Movement In Your Chair**

We are not designed for long periods of inactivity. Sitting without movement causes tiredness in our muscles which are being used to support our muscles. Staying active in your chair can go a long way to avoid back injury remembering of course not to move abruptly by bending or twisting.

**Active and Healthy Sitting**

Apart from expensive chairs there are options such as sitting aids which support and exercises muscles and provides good mobility. These aids can give for a better posture a stronger back pelvis and musculature.

The *Sitfit* for example is an air filled cushion that supports ergonomic sitting and on a plus side strengthens the back muscles.

It also comes with a series of exercises that can be done standing, sitting or kneeling.

The *sit standard wedge* is a triangular shape sitting wedge which helps with an upright posture. It is supportive of the spine and most importantly the intervertebral discs providing an optimal posture.

The *deluxe version* is what I call top of the range for a sitting wedge. It gives for an upright posture without effort, it takes the pressure of the discs and gives for equal weight bearing on both buttock cheeks. This gives for better comfort.

**Exercises**

Back exercises can help release muscle tension caused by sitting. Doing just a few everyday will really improve your general spinal mobility which can make all the difference to your wellbeing.

*link to cards*