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## KEEP MOVING!

Medical and Ergonomic field studies indicate that static postures are associated with increasing number of health concerns.

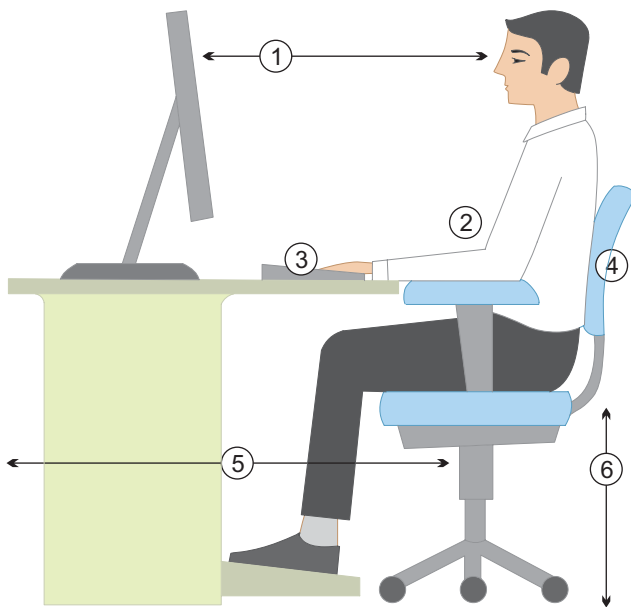
This paper aims to share the findings of the effect of static postures on the health of office goers in the Indian context.

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Wellness@Work is a Godrej Interio initiative committed to helping improve the health of employees in modern workspaces.

Godrej Interio Ergonomics Cell



### Current work scenario

- Longer work hours
- Connected work spaces: less need to walk around
- Static postures for long stretches of time

### Background

This whitepaper is based on a research conducted by the Godrej Interio Ergonomics Team to understand the co-relation between MSDs and long hours of seating. The study group consisted of more than 100 office workers from offices across India, in a wide range of work profiles, but essentially office-based jobs. The age group studied was office workers in the 20-50 age group.

The objective of the research was to study effects of static postures amongst office goers in India.

### Introduction

#### Current work scenario involves long hours of sitting

There are several reasons to why the office worker today is sitting continuously at the desk, adopting static postures. To list, here are key ones:

- The office worker today spends many more hours at work, compared to their counterparts from a decade or more ago. Most of these hours in the office are spent working on the computer / laptop.
- The modern workplace with increased use of network connectivity is reducing the need for people to move around in office for communication purposes.
- The intensely competitive nature of today's workspaces has made tight deadlines an innate part of the modern office. Having to deliver on these deadlines means working consistently without breaks and distractions.

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## How office workers 'Spend' their time

### Worrying Statistics

9 Hours  
Sitting

Time that 64% employees spend at desk, in meetings and conferences

6 Hours  
at Desk

68% employees work continuously at their workstations

2 Hours in  
Conferences

75% employees attend long conferences every day.

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These various factors force the modern office worker to sit in highly strained postures for long hours. These postures place a strain on the body, leading to fatigue, muscle strain and even spinal and skeletal injuries over time.

### What happens during extended working hours

When your body is inactive for over 30 minutes at a time, here's a look at what happens to your body:

- When you maintain the same posture for more than 30-40 minutes, you begin to experience stiffness in the joints.
- Absence of natural movement leads to pressure on spine and can cause erosion of the spine bone in certain sections.
- Long hours of wrong sitting leads to poor blood circulation in lower extremities, leading to swelling in ankles, varicose veins, blood clots (Deep Vein Thrombosis: DVT).

< As per the Godrej Interio study, mentioned alongside following are some worrying facts on office workers on any given day.

## Large number of office workers suffer from multiple pain problems

Given that the human body is designed to be active for a majority of its waking hours, the above statistics reveal the seriousness of the situation. Regularly sitting in bad postures affects the muscles, joints and bones in the spine, neck and related regions, causing wear and tear and resulting in aches and pains over a sustained period of time. Conditions like low back pain, aches in the wrist and shoulders were amongst the most cited reason behind casual leave from work among employees, leading to overall drop in productivity of the employees.

76% complained about musculoskeletal pain / discomfort in last 6 months.

44%  
Single Pain  
Problem

56%  
Multiple Pain  
Problem



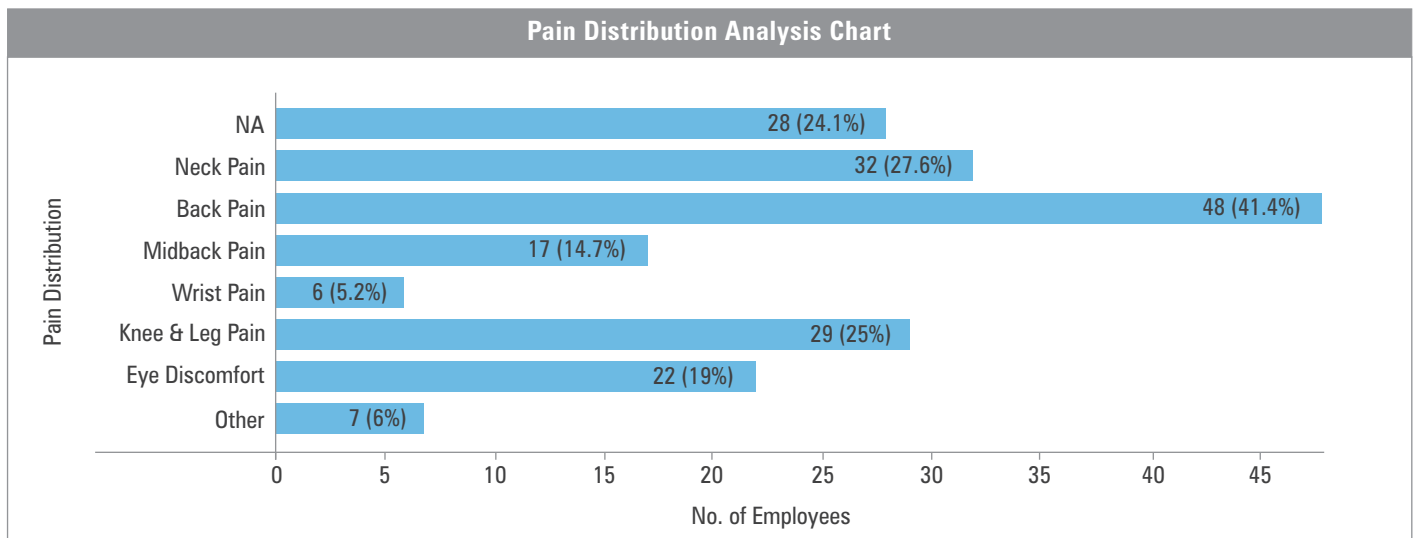
Most of the office workers surveyed complained about having suffered from muscular or joint pain / discomfort during the last 6 months; with more people suffering from multiple pain problems than single pain problems.

A quick look at the pain analysis chart reveals back, neck and knee pain being the most dominant, with wrist and eye discomfort and headache following close behind.

Most common complaints:  
**Back, Neck and Knee** the worst affected by sedentary lifestyle

## KEY COMPLAINTS

1. Maximum:  
Back, neck and knee pain
2. Secondary:  
Wrist pain, eye discomfort and headache



### Occurrence of pain in different age groups

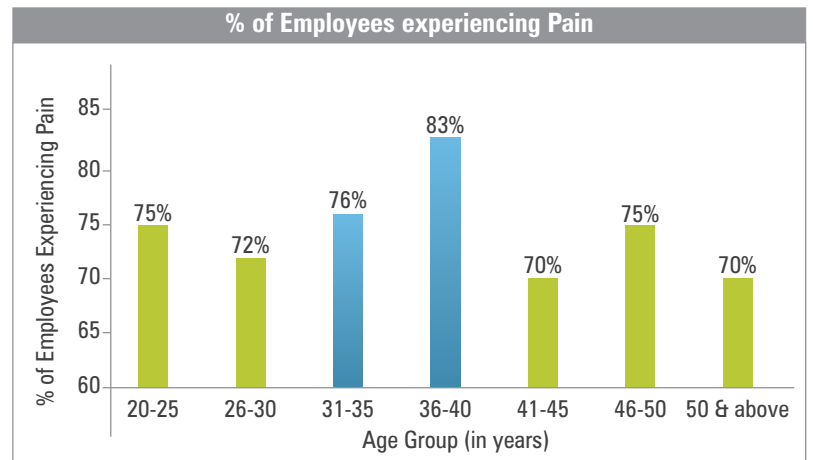
The research reports revealed the employees in the age group of 31-40 years suffered the most pain, while the younger age group of 20-25-year-old employees had the most skewed Male : Female ratio.

In this age group, 83% of women suffered from spinal pain (neck, mid-back and low back) as compared to 17% of their male counterparts. This can be directly related to young women in the workforce putting in extended hours in the early career years.

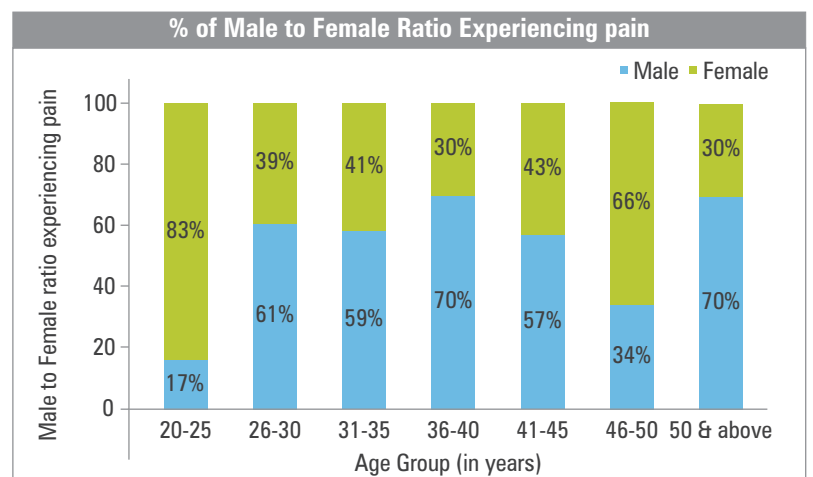
Age-wise analysis:  
Physical Discomfort highest  
amongst 36-40 year olds

## AT HIGH RISK! 20-25 year old women

Study reveals young office workers in the age group of 20-25 years, especially women are suffering from chronic muscle and joint pains caused by static postures maintained for long hours.



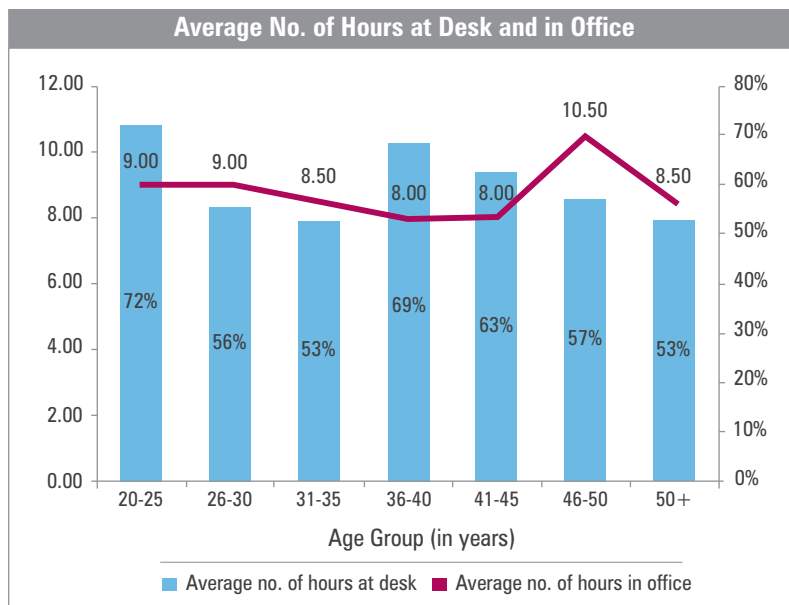
In gender comparison:  
young women are the worst affected  
by long hours of sitting!



### Low levels of activity compound MSD issues

Another interesting aspect that was studied in the survey was the amount of time different age groups actually spend in the office, and the %age of that time spent sitting.

## 'Long hours of sitting' workstyle compounds health issues

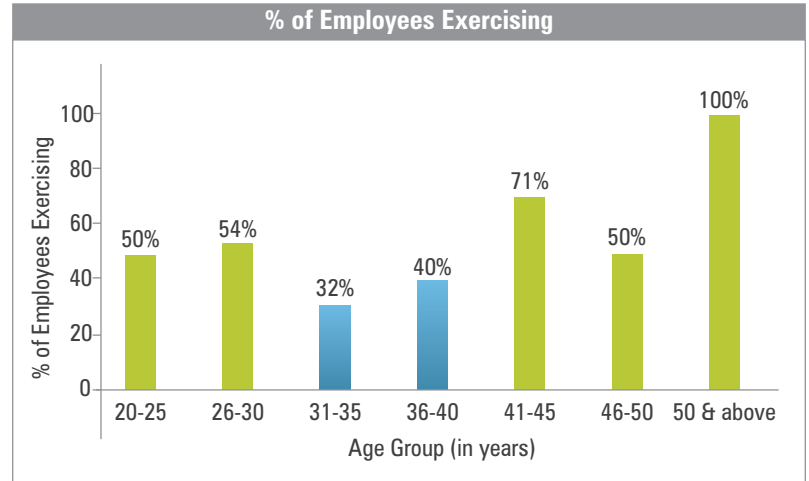


As the graph shows, the office workers in the 46-50 years age group put in the longest hours: up to 10.5 hours per day; but this group appears to be more mobile during their office hours. They spent only 57% of their working day (6 hours) sitting.

The group that closely follows this one in terms of putting in long working hours is the 20-25 years' group, that puts in an average of 9 hours of work a day. In contrast, this group spends 72% of their office time (6.48 hours) sitting and hardly moves around or gets out of their chairs. If this audience is not made aware of the importance of ergonomic postures in the early working years, they could end up permanently harming their spine and muscles.

**Lack of exercise emerges as contributing risk factor**

The study also revealed that the age groups that most experienced pain are the ones that were exercising the least, implying an overall sedentary lifestyle being further compounded by little or no physical activity even in the leisure time.



Age groups that suffer most pain, exercise the least



**Organizations need to address growing health issues**

More than 95% of the employees spoken to were not aware of the ill effects of static postures at work. Other key findings of the survey revealed that over 60% of office goes do not exercise daily and remain physically inactive during the working hours as well.

Employees use balms, medication or self-prescribe pillows for pain relief. Some also visit OHS centers to have these aches treated.

**15%**

**Out of Office**

Employees took 3-4 days leave in a span of 2 months due to MSDs & Pain; resulting in loss of productivity for the organization.



**GODREJ INTERIO'S 3 STEP APPROACH TO A HEALTHIER WORKFORCE**

From an organizational perspective, having a larger workforce adopting static posture for a long time is a definite red flag. Over time, these issues can have a serious impact on employee wellness and organization productivity.

Godrej Interio works with organizations to enable them to develop and nurture a healthy and productive workforce. As experts in office ergonomics, Godrej Interio strongly believes that education and awareness is the key to ensuring a healthy workforce in organizations, reduce medical costs and retain optimal levels of productivity at all times across all age groups.

To this end, the GI Ergonomics Cell has a 3 step **A-C-P** approach:

1. Awareness: Spread the Wellness Message
2. Correction: Work Space Improvements
3. Prevention: Employee Behavior Training

**Healthy Ram**

**SHOULDER RESPONSIBILITY, NOT STRESS!**

Hunching your shoulders while working causes a nagging ache around the shoulders. Relax with this simple yoga exercise

- Relax your shoulders by pulling your shoulder blades together.
- Hold this position, breath in through your nose and push your stomach out, filling it with air.

Pass on this message to your family and friends & show them you care about their health as much as they do!  
If you have comfort or health queries related to office environment, email Godrej Interio Ergonomics. Call at wellness@godrej.com; or WhatsApp us at +91 7506354276. [in](#) /Godrej-Interio [in](#) /Godrejinterio4U [in](#) /Godrejinterio [in](#) /Godrejinterio

**1. AWARENESS**

It is important for organizations and its employees to understand the effects of static posture on their health, wellbeing and productivity which can be addressed through education and awareness.

In line with the same, Godrej Interio offers **knowledge support to organizations via weekly Wellness Tips.**

It has two key purposes:

- a) Ways to take care of one's health in the light of changing work pattern
- b) Improve work productivity by encouraging correct work postures at workplace.

Godrej Interio Ergonomics Cell works closely with corporate and their employees to make better working habits a part of their work culture.



## 2. WORKSPACE DESIGN IMPROVEMENTS

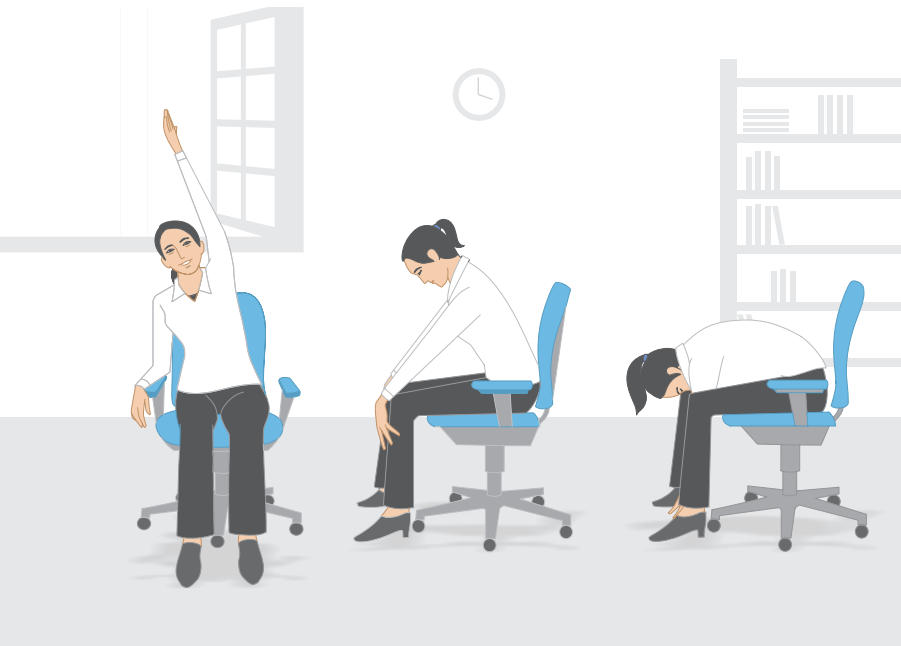
It is important for organizations to develop workplace wellness policies that reflect their commitment to create a safe, positive and healthy workplace with special focus on overall ergonomic improvement.

Godrej Interio can support organizations design workspaces that will encourage users to keep changing their posture while working.

Some ways of ensuring wellness while at work are listed below:

- **Ergonomic and Workspace Assessment:** Ergonomic assessment is a brief assessment of user interaction with workspace, work desk interaction and suggest improvements to enhance ergonomic & wellness quotient of workspace
- **Opportunity to integrate change in present seating systems by introducing sit-stand workstations.** Experts state that doing work by both sitting and standing mimics natural movement of human body and results in lower level of reported whole body discomfort and reduced back pain.  
  
Also, standing while at work keeps the user alert, and increases chances of interaction with colleagues around.
- **Provide different seating options that can be used by employees across the work day,** like bean bags, bar stools, standing tables...essentially furniture that would encourage change in posture.

# STAY ACTIVE, STAY HEALTHY!

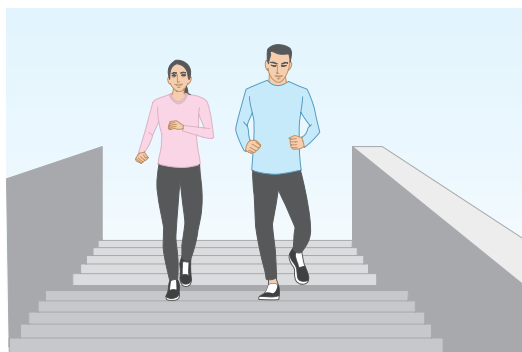


### 3. EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR TRAINING

**Wellness@Work** is an initiative of Godrej Interio where a team of experts conducts training for employees across organizations. The training introduces the participants to the changing work trends and its implications, correct postures to be adopted at workplace and simple techniques which help improve overall employee wellness.

In short, employers are encouraged to help their employees to develop awareness about avoiding the static posture, and to include exercise and movement into the daily routine.

The move to having an active work-life is not a short term project that an organization or an individual can adopt and implement quickly. It is about changing work habits and mindsets around how we work and what we seek to ultimately accomplish.



To know more about investing in a healthy team and a healthier, more productive organization, connect with our Godrej Interio Ergonomics Team. To receive free wellness tips, do mail us at [wellness@godrej.com](mailto:wellness@godrej.com) or WhatsApp on +91 7506364276.