



FIVE SURPRISING THINGS THAT PROLONGED SITTING DOES TO YOUR BODY

Ever wonder why prolonged sitting is so bad for you? It's not just the lack of exercise; your body actually goes through several unhealthy changes.

Let's be honest, most of us spend a large portion of our days sitting down, whether that's in front of your desk at work or in front of the TV at home. You might have heard that this is bad for you. Over time it can cause health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, mental health problems and back pain. But why is sitting so bad?

Part of it is because you aren't up and moving. We all know that exercise is good for us, and you aren't going to be able to get your heart racing if you're sat down all day. However, it looks like this isn't the only problem.

Dr Peter Katzmarzyk, professor at the Pennington Biomedical

Research Center, found that even people who exercised were at risk of an early death if they spent too long sitting each day. He said of a study he conducted: "Even within physically active individuals, there was a strong association between sitting and risk of mortality."

It turns out your body changes in strange, unhealthy ways every time you sit down. Here are just some of the ways that being in a chair affects you:

1. Your metabolism slows

When you sit down for a long period of time, you aren't moving much. This is especially true for your legs, which contain some of the largest muscles in the body. Unfortunately,

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one of the things that helps to clear fat from the bloodstream is muscle contraction, so while you are sitting down, this process gets much slower.

Without your muscles contracting and clearing away fat, you will begin to gain weight. This is one of the reasons why prolonged sitting causes obesity: it's not just that you aren't exercising, you're also making it harder for your body to burn fat.

2. Your body becomes misshapen

The human body evolved to stand up and move around most of the time, so sitting down is not a natural position for us; cavemen didn't have office chairs, after all! Sitting makes your shoulders curve, your neck bend forwards and your spine compress. All of these will make you stiff and sore, and can lead to chronic pain over time.

3. Blood pools in your legs

If you aren't active, your heart rate is going to slow down and it's going to be harder for blood to leave your legs. Gravity makes it stay in the bottom half of your body for longer than usual, and this can cause varicose veins and even blood clots if you aren't careful.

4. Your muscles begin to atrophy

When it comes to muscles if you don't use them, you lose them. Sitting down means your abs, glutes and leg muscles don't have to do any work to keep you upright. As they don't get used, they will end up losing mass. This not only makes you weaker, it also increases your chance of injury.

5. Your stomach gets squashed

Finally, sitting down causes you to squash your stomach due to the position it makes you take. If you have just eaten, that food is also going to get compacted, which doesn't make digesting it any easier. This can cause cramps, indigestion, heartburn and a whole load of other unpleasant symptoms.

All of these things sound rather unpleasant but we don't want to be all doom and gloom. A few simple changes can be made to ensure that you are avoiding these problems from sitting. Taking regular breaks to walk around and have a stretch can make the world of difference. Start today by taking a look through our resources and make some positive changes to your health today! (Link to other articles when ready).