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The American Dental Association has posted the below article which pertains to dental professionals. However, we feel that the tips outlined would be of use to our patients as well. Please take a moment and see if you could utilize any of these tips in your day-to-day fitness regimen. We hope that you find this article interesting.

Sharon Szeszycki DDS

Susan, Cindy, Kim and Jill

FROM THE ADA

Ergonomic Tips to Help You Stay Healthy

If your muscles are sore at the end of the day, you're not alone. About 40 to 60 percent of dental professionals suffer from work-related musculoskeletal issues, according to the [ADA Center for Professional Success](#). Here are some [easy in-office stretches](#) to keep you and your staff healthy.



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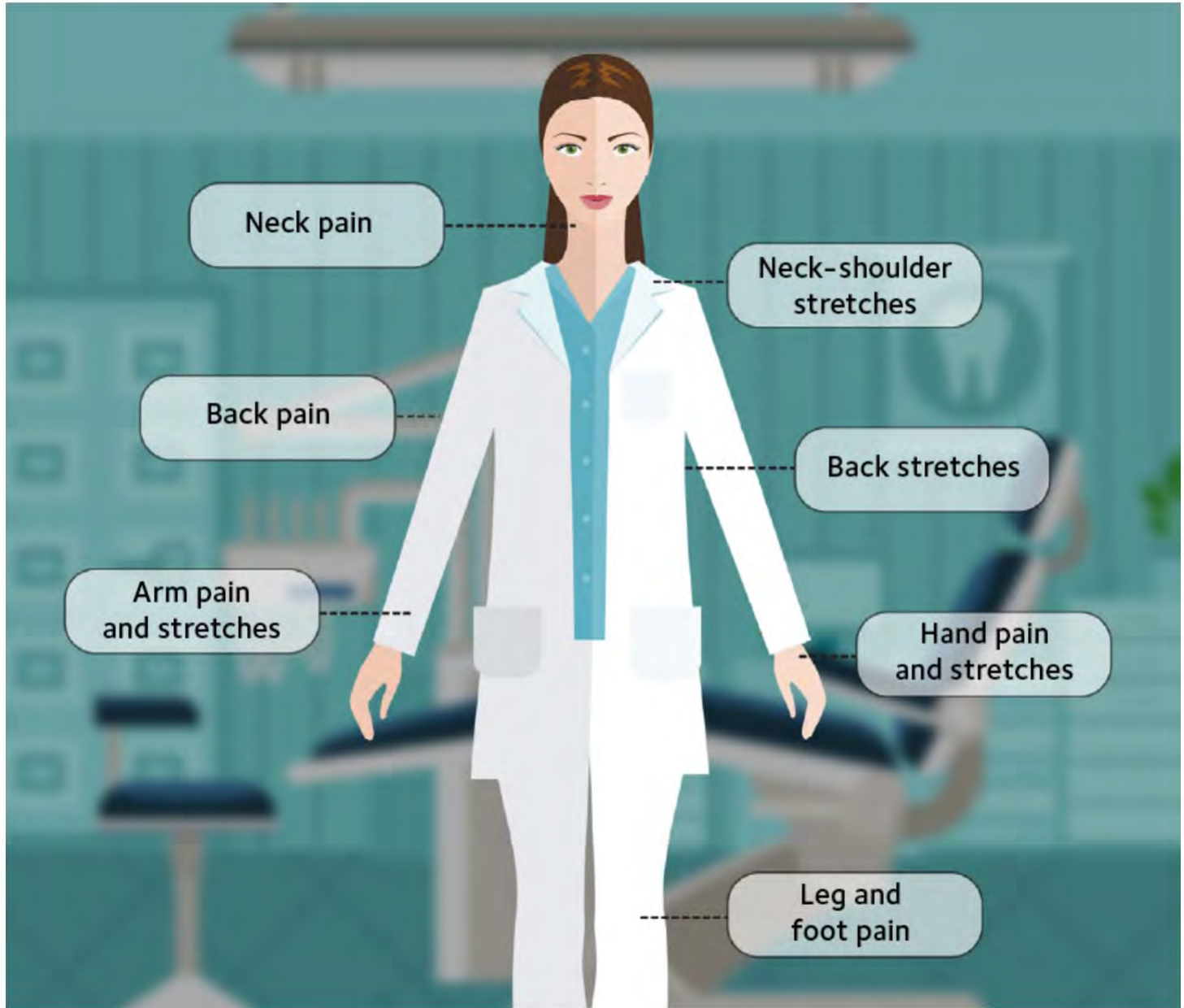
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Ergonomic tips to help you stay healthy

Posted on [May 2, 2016](#)

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If your muscles are sore at the end of the day — even though you're a young new dentist or dental student — you're not alone.

According to the [ADA Center for Professional Success](#), 40 to 60 percent of dental professionals suffer from work-related musculoskeletal issues.

Here are some of the painful predicaments inherent in hands-on dentistry and easy in-office stretches to keep you and your staff healthy.

Neck pain To avoid some neck pain, when possible, sit up straight and keep your feet flat on the floor. In addition, check for the correct focal length and declination angle on your loupes. If the focal length is not adequate or the declination angle is not enough, it forces you to drop your head into a poorly balanced position.

Neck-shoulder stretches Simple stretches throughout the day are important. Try intertwining your fingers together behind your head and bringing your elbows forward and back; turning your head from the right, to the left, to the right again; and retracting and protracting your neck.

Back pain Dental professionals are especially susceptible to back pain because of prolonged sitting, awkward postures and sustained muscular contractions. You should seek medical attention if the pain has gone from an acute episode to more of a chronic situation, or a progression of symptoms from your back or your neck into an extremity.

Back stretches Again, simple stretches throughout the day should be done, including: intertwining your fingers behind your head, bringing your elbows forward and then looking up and pointing your elbows toward the sky; bringing your knees apart and leaning forward toward the floor; keeping hands on your chest and rotating from the left to the right; and slouching and arching your back.

Arm pain and stretches Discomfort or tenderness in your forearm near your elbow may be the beginning of some irritation of your wrist and hand extensor muscles. This could be a precursor to a more problematic condition such as tendinitis. Stretches include touching your palm to your shoulder; and simulating the so-called “touchdown” signal that NFL referees make after a touchdown — in other words, raising both straight arms into the air.

Hand pain and stretches If hand pain is bothering you, use fitted gloves, rather than ambidextrous gloves; alternate between thicker and thinner handled instruments; use powered instruments with proper prophylaxis angles; and take short stretch breaks between patients. Stretches include turning palms up, and then down; and wiggling your fingers and shaking your hands.

Leg and foot pain and stretches In between patients, you can stretch your leg and foot muscles while sitting in your chair. Some exercises include marching in place; spreading your knees back and forth; straightening your leg, and then bending your knees; and rotating your ankles while your leg is out in front of you. These exercises are not meant as a substitute for medical evaluation from a trained physician.