



Back in Action^{UK}
Keeping workplaces moving

Back Story

Quarterly Newsletter



Spring 2022
Issue 02



WELCOME

Welcome to the Spring edition of Back Story. This quarterly newsletter aims to bring you the latest news, recent research, and the up-to-date guidance on staying healthy in the workplace and beyond.

Spring is the perfect time to start moving more and, in this edition, we explore how movement can have a positive effect on our health and wellbeing. A good night's sleep is also a key factor in staying healthy and preventing injuries, so we offer you some tips on how to optimise your sleep.





BACK TO BASICS

TOP 5 TIPS

Keep Moving This Spring



If you would like some advice about the sort of exercises and stretches you can do for movement snacks, movement pairs or in the driving seat, get in touch with Back In Action UK on 020 7480 5976.

Our Physios can develop a tailored programme for you which considers your current levels of fitness and individual needs.

1

ONE

Desk Breaks: Sitting at a desk for long periods can lead to discomfort and increased muscle tension in the body. Set a movement alarm to remind you to move every 30-45 minutes. Take a brief walk or do a few stretches before returning to your desk. As well as increasing blood flow to the tissues, research shows it can also improve your focus and productivity.

2

TWO

Movement Snacks: Life can be busy, finding an hour to go to the gym or do an activity can be a barrier to moving. Try a movement snack instead, where you take 5-10 minutes to do some more vigorous exercise such as a brisk walk or some resistance exercises like squats, press-ups, or sit-ups. Adding small movement snacks to your day can help you build strength and keep you moving.

3

THREE

Walk and Talk: Whenever the phone rings or you need to make a call, stand up and walk while you talk if you can. Similarly, if you need to meet with a colleague, have your discussion on the move. This kind of incidental movement all adds up and allows the body to have a change of posture and activity.

4

FOUR

Movement Pairs: Develop new movement habits by pairing up a daily task with a stretch or exercise. Every time you carry out the task – also do the exercise. For example: when you clean your teeth, do some 'heel raises', where you lift both heels off the floor onto your toes and down again. Small movement habits add up to significant benefits overall.

5

FIVE

Driver MOT: If you drive for work it can be difficult to find the time or space to move. Firstly, try some warm-up exercises before you get in the vehicle. Once driving, use the natural stops in traffic to do some stretches, particularly in the neck, shoulders, and upper back. When you finish your journey, stretch out your lower back and hips to re-balance the body from being seated in the vehicle



BACK IT UP

NEW RESEARCH ON HEALTH AND EXPECTATION

This section of our newsletter brings you some of the latest research news in the field of occupational health and general wellbeing.



“Resetting our expectations can lead to positive health benefits”

If you would like to start exercising more but are worried about a health condition or an injury, get in touch with Back In Action UK on 020 7480 5976.

Our Physios can advise you on building your fitness in a safe and sustainable way.

Do you always assume the worst or the best? You might think you are naturally predisposed to gaining weight? You might even believe that the stresses in your life are harming your health? You may think these assumptions are inescapable but, by learning to reset our expectations, we ourselves can have truly remarkable effects on our health, happiness and productivity.

In an interesting study, by Harvard university, researchers explained to some hotel cleaners that the amount of energy exerted by Hoovering the floor, changing beds or moving the furniture over the course of a week easily amounted to the level of exercise recommended for good health. Of course, their work is often physically intense, but feels very different from exercising in the gym. One month later, researchers found that the cleaners' fitness had noticeably improved with significant changes in their weight and blood pressure. The shift in their beliefs about their bodies, and the expectations of their work, had brought about real physiological benefits, without any change in their lifestyle.

The “Expectation Effect” has now been recognised through studies into not only exercise but sleep, stress, willpower, and beliefs around age. So, it appears, in many respects, you are what you think you are!!





BACK OFFICE

MEET THE BACK IN ACTION UK TEAM

Back in Action UK are a team of experienced occupational physiotherapists and support staff who provide workplace health and physical health solutions to our clients all over the UK. In this edition, we would like to introduce you to team member **Jo East**, Clinical Manager at Back in Action UK



Pictures: Jo appreciating her latest catch!
And Juno the one eyed/one eared dog

Jo East

Clinical Manager and Physiotherapist

Can you tell us about your role?

My role is quite varied, but essentially, I am responsible for ensuring the highest quality of care and clinical outcomes for our patients. This includes being the main point of contact for all staff who have questions or queries on a range of clinical issues as well as being responsible for recruitment and retention. An important part of my role is conducting clinical audits and governance, which ensures we are maintaining the highest standards. In addition, I am still a practicing Physiotherapist and run a weekly clinic in Kent.

What's your favourite part of the job?

Meeting new people both clinically and corporately. I love helping my patients and I take great interest in their lives which enables me to approach their care in a holistic way. I find it particularly rewarding when a patient sees improvement through making changes in their lives based on my advice.

How do you keep fit and healthy?

I walk my hooligan dog who has one eye and one ear and looks like she came off worse in a fight with a lion! I'm also a fair weather fly fisherwoman. I normally travel to Kent where we fish in three different trout waters depending on the conditions.

What are your favourite things about Spring?

I enjoy gardening and grow my own vegetables. I'm looking forward to getting some seedlings going in the greenhouse and watching bulbs pop up, so there's lots of lovely colour again. I'm also looking forward to spending some time by the water, enjoying nature and watching the ducklings bob about and avoid the nesting swans.

What's on your bucket list?

Salmon fishing in Alaska, Tarpon fishing in Costa Rica and brown trout fishing in Montana. I'm more likely to go crabbing in Herne Bay though!



BACK TO THE FUTURE

BACK IN ACTION UK NEWS

The Back In Action UK team has been very busy over the last few months working on new initiatives and developing existing services.



Injury Prevention Training

Research has found that traditional approaches to Manual Handling Training can be ineffective, particularly if it is solely classroom based. Back in Action UK have redesigned their training to consider the latest research on injury prevention and now include additional elements. This includes practical training relevant to the job role such as moving and handling in real life situations using the employee's actual vehicles or equipment. In addition, the trainers can extend this further by joining the employees on their shift to help them apply the right techniques during difficult or busy times.

Back In Action UK are also focusing on musculoskeletal screening to address any potential issues before they become a problem. The trainers also consider the unique physical characteristics of each employee and help them to apply manual handling techniques on an individual basis to ensure their safety and comfort. The new scheme will be piloted this year.



Drop-In Welfare Clinics

Back In Action UK have created their first Drop-In Welfare Clinics. These clinics allow employees to discuss any issues related to health and wellbeing with the Physiotherapy team.

Physiotherapists take a holistic approach to health, in other words, they consider the person as a whole and not just their musculoskeletal problem. They recognise that there are many factors that can have an impact on someone's injury or pain problem. Helping to address these other issues can have a positive impact on the outcome of an injury and overall health. Our physiotherapists also have the knowledge and tools to refer employees to specialist practitioners and signpost to other organisations or resources where appropriate.

The Welfare Clinics are designed to be a safe, confidential space for employees to share their problems or concerns with a health professional.



Health and Wellbeing Hub

This unique new hub provides physiotherapy services, onsite gym facilities and regular fitness classes available to all employees. The gym has a large area for resistance training and cardio equipment, giving members plenty of choice to keep their workouts varied and fun.

There is an extensive Fitness Class timetable and members can use the 'My Fitness Pal' app, which provides custom training plans. In addition, there are weekly Healthy Eating Q&A's providing ideas to support health eating habits. This new hub is proving to be a popular service, and the gym now has over 150 members. Gym inductions, exercise plans, and 1:1 Personal Training sessions have all helped members understand the benefits of exercise and stay motivated.

If you would like to know more about Welfare Clinics, Injury Prevention Training or the Health and Wellbeing Hub, please call us on **0207 480 5976** or email at enquiries@backinactionuk.com.



BACK FOR GOOD

GETTING A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

When you visit one of our Back in Action UK physios, they will usually ask you about your sleep. This may not seem relevant to your pain or injury, but there is a good reason for this question. Sleep is an important time for healing and overall health, both mentally and physically. Whilst we are sleeping, we produce hormones which play a key role in muscle growth and recovery. So, it's not surprising that better sleep leads to better outcomes for injury and chronic pain. Here are some tips on optimising your sleep:-



Bedtime Routines: Research has shown that one of the most effective strategies for getting a good night's sleep is to have a regular bedtime routine. This helps our body clock to set a natural rhythm for the sleep/wake cycle. Try and stick to a regular bedtime and getting up time – even at the weekends – and develop a relaxing bedtime routine such as having a bath or doing some breathing exercises



Food Choices: Eating a healthy, balanced diet is another effective way to promote a good night's sleep. There are even foods (e.g., chicken and pumpkins seeds) which contain natural sleep-inducing chemicals. It's also a good idea to avoid sugary foods as they can interfere with your internal body clock. Alcohol, caffeinated drinks, and spicy foods can also negatively affect sleep.



Digital Detox: It's common to spend time watching TV or checking through our smart phones before bed. However, the blue light which these devices emit can interfere with our natural sleep hormones making it more difficult to fall asleep. Try a digital detox an hour before bed and swap the screen for a book or listening to restful music or a podcast.



Keep Active: Regular exercise can enhance sleep quantity and quality. A recent study found that exercise halved the time it took to fall asleep in older adults. It can also reduce night wakefulness and increase total sleep time. Exercising in the evening can interfere with sleep for some people, so adjust your time for activity if needed.



The Sleep Environment: Ensure that your bedroom is providing the best possible environment to support sleep. Research shows that we sleep better in a room that is quiet, cool and dark, with the ideal temperature is around 18 degrees Celsius. Dim the lights for a while before bedtime and ensure your window coverings block out any streetlight and early morning sunlight.

*If you still struggle with sleep despite these strategies, get in touch with your Back in Action UK team on **020 7480 5976** or email at **enquiries@backinactionuk.com** to discuss how we could support you further.*



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