What’s the Best Type of Office Chair for Fibromyalgia?

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The Best Office Setup for Fibromyalgia Patients

When I started my new office job, I decided to tell my boss I had fibromyalgia. She was incredibly supportive, asked me lots of questions and we discussed any adjustments that may make my job easier.

Explaining the various symptoms associated with fibromyalgia is incredibly difficult, and trying to succinctly talk through the things that help is even harder. But, over the years, I've noticed a couple of practical things that make being at work that little bit easier.

Smarter and Slicker

Office equipment is getting smarter and slicker, and ergonomic items like split keyboards and vertical mice are becoming more affordable, attractive and, most importantly, effective.

If you haven't used these before, I highly recommend them. The split keyboard and upright mouse make it easier to be at a computer all day, as your arms are rested in a more natural, comfortable position.

Some of the products on the market are so light that they can be moved between office locations with little to no fuss at all.

The Right Chair

It's not just about what's on the desk though; a proper office chair is also an essential part of a fibro-friendly office arrangement.

The right chair should have a high back to support your head, and you should be able to adjust the height so your feet rest flat on the floor. The arms should be adjustable as well, and set so that when your arms are resting on them your shoulders are relaxed. Lumbar support is ideal too — if your chair doesn't have this built in, you can get support cushions that strap on to your chair.

It's one thing to have this fancy setup in the office. How do you make sure you have it at home too? If you're anything like me, you spend hours on your laptop curled up on your sofa or lying in your bed, knowing full well that your poor posture is no doubt contributing to your existing back and neck pain (despite your mattress for fibromyalgia).

And as a writer, blogger and full-on internet addict, I can spend hours glued to my laptop without creating time to stretch or move about.

This is something I've really struggled with over the past few years. I know I'm making the situation worse, but I'm not entirely sure the best way to make it better.

I don't have the most stylish house in the world, but I'd like to think my country cottage has a cosy, homey feel. Adding a huge office chair and a bulky desk, with reams of computer wires, isn't part of my home decor plan.

In fact, on the one occasion I did invest in a home office, the desk and chair sat gathering dust at the back of the house whilst I continued to curl up under a blanket on my sofa.

So what's the plan? Well, as is often the case with fibromyalgia coping strategies, there's more than one solution.

Firstly, it's about having the right mental attitude and, secondly, it's about having the right equipment.

It’s Time to Get Practical

Mentally, you have to admit that curled up like a snake with your laptop for eight hours is not good for your body and therefore you have to make a commitment to be more responsible.

You have to promise yourself that an evening on the sofa is fine but if you're going to spend hours typing away, you need to create an ergonomic environment that supports your health condition as much as possible.

As for the equipment, stay focused on creating a practical environment that you will actually use. For example, if you want to stay in the living room under a blanket, buy a chair that has a high back to support the head and arms — but that also looks good in your living room so you don’t have to tuck yourself away.

Ideally, you want an office chair like I described above, with a lumbar support built in — but if you know you won't use it, get something you *will* use. You should also sit at a proper desk, but again, if you know that's not going to happen get yourself a tray or portable desk shelf so you have some kind of firm surface beneath your laptop.

Learn all you can about setting up an ergonomic desk space and then figure out how you can make it work for your unique situation.

I’m trying to be stricter with myself because I know when it comes to self-care I can be my own worst enemy, and a proper chair to support your body is one of the basic things I know I should be investing in. Investing in, and actually using.