



Proper seating is essential for comfort and health, especially for those with mobility issues. Poorly fitted chairs can lead to various problems such as slumping, sliding forward, or falling to one side. These issues can result from both the chair's design and the individual's medical conditions. Below, we outline common seating problems, their contributing factors, and the associated health risks, along with features to consider when choosing a recliner.

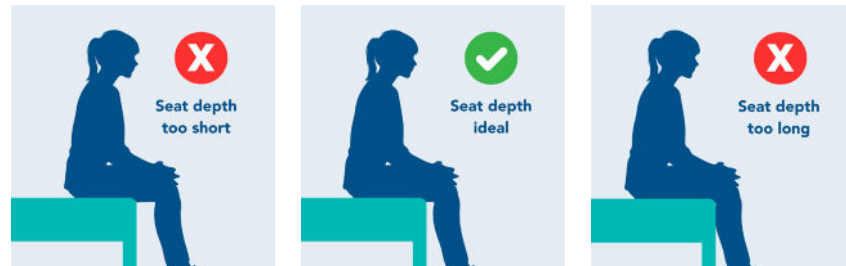
Common seating issues

| | Chair issues | Medical issues | Health Risks |
|--|---|--|--|
|  <p>Slumping and sliding forward in the chair</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat depth is too deep or shallow • Chair is too high • Back is too upright • Armrests are too low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced range of motion in the hips • Weak trunk muscles • Tight hamstrings • Over or underweight | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased difficulty with breathing and swallowing • Development of a permanent "hunched" posture • Sore bottom and risk of pressure injuries (spine, heels, buttocks) |

| | Chair issues | Medical issues | Health Risks |
|---|--|---|--|
|  <p>Falling to one side</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair is too wide • Back is too upright • Seat depth is too shallow • Armrests are too low or too high • Backrest does not support the trunk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hips are unequal • Weak trunk muscles • Curved spine (scoliosis) • Hip pain • Over or underweight | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased difficulty with breathing and swallowing • Development of a permanent "hunched" posture • Sore bottom and risk of pressure injuries (spine, heels, buttocks) • Damage to internal organs due to prolonged compression |

Seat Depth

- Ideal seat depth is sitting with your back fully supported by the chair, with an approx. 2.5cm gap between the front of the seat cushion and the back of the knee.



- The goal is for as much of the bottom and thigh to be supported by the chair seat as possible, spreading weight across as wide an area as we can to reduce pressure and increase comfort.

Seat Width

- Ideal seat width is an approximately 2.5 cm gap on each side between your widest point (usually the hips) and the armrests.



- Too wide – Makes using the armrests uncomfortable, encourages 'leaning' over to reach the armrest, can cause shoulder pain and increases pressure on shoulder joints when pushing up from the chair
- Too narrow – causes pressure on the hips and is very uncomfortable if the armrests are the incorrect height.

Chair Height

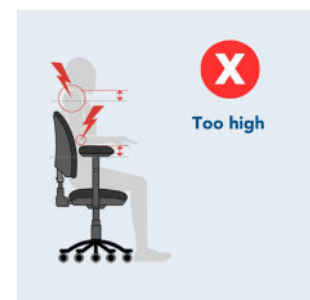
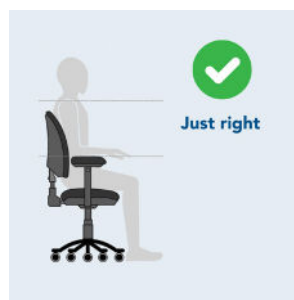
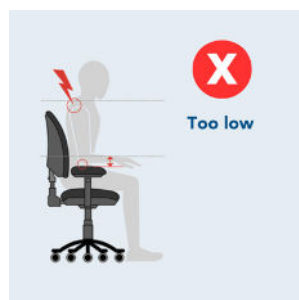
- Ideal chair height is to be able to sit with your feet flat on the ground at a right angle to support approx. 20% of bodyweight and prevent sliding forward in the chair (only relevant when not reclining).



- Too low – difficult to get out of and having your knees elevated reduces contact with the chair seat and increases the pressure on your bottom.
- Too high – Feet don't touch the ground and you slide forward in the chair, which can cause back pain, slumped posture, difficulty breathing and pressure issues in the heels, back and bottom.

Armrest Height

- Too Low – Can result in leaning to one side to 'reach' the armrest, this increases pressure on one side of the bottom and compresses the internal organs on that side.
- Too High – Can 'push' you one way when only one arm is on the armrest, resulting in leaning to one side, can cause shoulder pain as the armrests push your shoulder upwards.



Back and trunk support

- Does the backrest support your back and trunk in the right places? Please see below for options to consider.



Lateral supports



Waterfall cushions



Power lumbar and neck supports

- Lateral Supports – Some chairs come with this option, they help keep a person sitting upright when they just need a little bit of support.
- Waterfall Cushions – Some chairs come with this design option and in some case the amount of filling in each cushion can be adjusted to provide customised back support.
- Power lumbar and neck supports – Provide a fixed range of adjustment for additional support in these areas.

Seat covering

- Ensure that the covering has some stretch in it to prevent/reduce friction and shearing forces when getting in and out.
- Consider if the covering needs to be washable.
- Coverings that breathe are much better as they will not get too hot during prolonged sitting.

Leather is NOT recommended as it has no stretch, does not breathe well and can increase the risk of skin injury when getting in and out of the chair.

Important note

Chairs are designed with the “average” person in mind and as most of us are not average, it is usually difficult to find a standard recliner that is a perfect fit (often a compromise is required).