

# Living with repetitive strain injury

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Repetitive strain injury (RSI) can affect anyone who uses his or her hands a lot and repeats the same movements over and over again. It can develop whether you're working at a computer all day or spending hours

of leisure time immersed in handicrafts.

At first, symptoms—like pain and tingling—may go away once you stop the motions or the activity. But without treatment, including [lifestyle changes](#), symptoms are likely to become so severe that you could become unable to continue with your work or hobby.

## Recognizing RSI Symptoms

- Pain or burning
- Tingling
- Numbness
- Weakness
- Swelling
- Soreness

Don't hesitate to see your doctor if you experience one or more of these symptoms—don't assume that a few days off is enough to stop RSI. If the source of pain isn't addressed, symptoms can become irreversible.

Part of the solution is to take regular breaks from problematic but necessary activities throughout the day. Get up and move around for at least five minutes every half-hour, and stretch your arms, wrists and fingers.

Practice good posture. When sitting, your head and back should form a straight line from ears to hips. When at the computer, don't let your wrists bend to one side. Keep them in line with your forearms, fingers slightly curved over your keyboard. Don't self-treat by wearing a splint or using a wrist rest—both can interfere with natural movement and [blood circulation](#).

## More Typing Tips to Try

- Use all fingers to type, not just one
- Use keyboard shortcuts
- Take advantage of voice recognition software

Also, consider investigating the Alexander Technique, an approach to movement aimed at better posture and body mechanics helpful for RSI.

**More information:** You can learn more about the [Alexander Technique](#) online.

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