

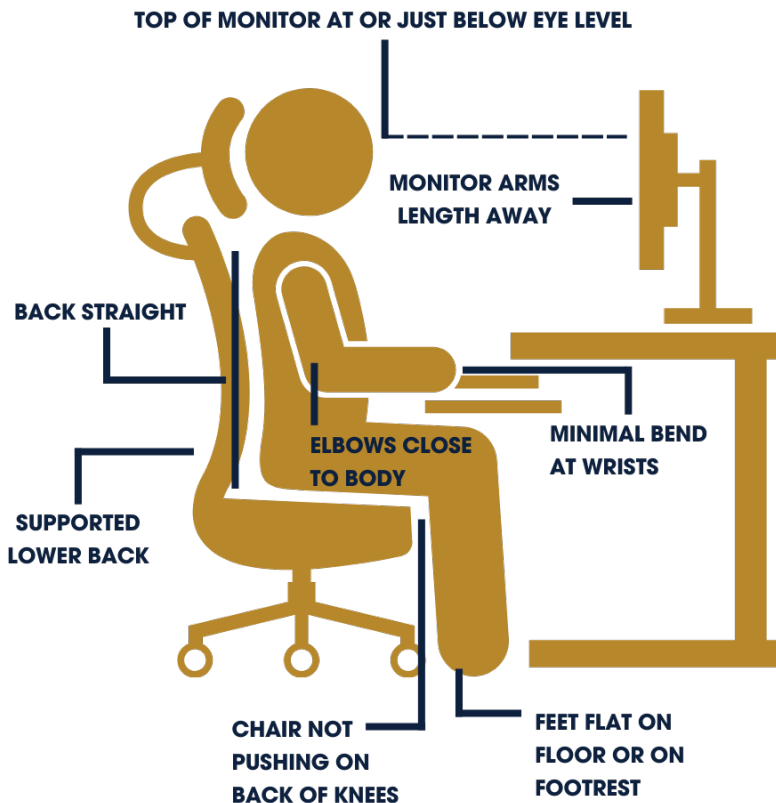
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Office Ergonomics

In this issue of the Employee Health + Safety Services Zone we will be covering the importance of proper office ergonomics. We will suggest changes you can implement in order to improve posture, musculoskeletal health, and overall well-being.

Additional Considerations:

- ✓ There should be enough desktop space so you aren't having to twist and bend.
- ✓ Allow enough space for your legs, feet, and knees as you swivel your chair when needed.



What is office ergonomics?

Office ergonomics is the science of designing the workstation to fit within the capabilities and limitations of the worker. Your office chair, monitor, and desk all play a role in office ergonomics design and your overall health. Many do not realize that a poor work station set up can have serious consequences on health. It is also important to keep in mind that there is no perfect ergonomic posture.

What is the ideal office set up?

Although there is no perfect work station set up, there are several recommendations that result in an improved set up.

Chairs should be used to support good posture. Having options for seat, armrest, and lumbar height is ideal. Using a chair with backrest tension can also keep the back supported and improve posture. For those with a shorter stature, the chair may need to be raised to minimize reach and arm elevation. In some cases a footstool may be needed to improve leg positioning. Take time when determining your chair set up. Also evaluate your posture periodically while working.

If you are using a monitor, ensure that it is directly in front of you. The monitor should be placed about 20 inches away from the body, approximately an arms length away. The top of the monitor screen should be at or just below eye level. If the monitor is lower than this, there are multiple ways to raise it including a monitor stand or other objects like books or stacks of paper. If you are using multiple monitors, they should all be at the same height. The top of the monitor should be tilted back 10-20 degrees for consistent viewing distance. If you use bifocals, avoid tipping your head back.

The keyboard and mouse should be next to each other, near elbow height. The elbows should stay tucked in, next to the body. This helps eliminate excessive reach which can strain the shoulder and elbow. If referencing documents while working on the computer, consider using a document holder. These holders can eliminate the extra reach caused by placing documents in front of the keyboard.

Health Tip

To avoid stiffness and muscle aches, walk and stretch during your break times.

If you have questions regarding this topic/office ergonomics, please reach out to team member Angela Shirk, AT, at 980-635-9556 or email us at wellness@cstcenter.com.

Repetitive Strain Injury

Repeating the same movements during your work day can lead to damage of your muscles, nerves, and tendons. Those working a multitude of occupations including blue collar jobs and office jobs repeat the same movements everyday. The damage that results from this repetition is known as Repetitive Strain Injury. The most common case of Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) is tendonitis. Another more serious injury caused by repetitive strain injury is carpal tunnel syndrome.

The most common symptoms associated with repetitive strain injury includes tingling or numbing of fingers, losing the capability to grab objects, and neck, wrist, elbow, and shoulder pain. The sooner these conditions are treated, the better the expected outcome of the severity and duration.

Frequent standing and stretching breaks from a proper office setup is the key to preventing repetitive strain injury. Changing up tasks every so often is key. For example, it is better to switch between typing, writing, and using a mouse rather than doing each task individually then moving onto the next. Switching between tasks is an opportune time to stand, walk around, and stretch as another form of prevention against RSI.

Combating Digital Eye Strain

Seventy percent of people who use a computer for more than two hours a day experience digital eye strain. Computer use increases the risk of having dry eyes. You only blink 33% of what you are supposed to when using a computer. In order to reduce eye strain, you can consider moving your desk and monitor so that the window is to your side, not behind you or your monitor. Also having a higher screen resolution and font size helps lessen the strain. If you use glasses or contacts, having an up-to-date prescription will also decrease eye strain.

Follow the 20-20-20 Rule



Every 20 minutes...



Take a 20 second break...



To focus on an object that is 20 feet away.

Sources:

"Ergonomics & Computer Use | University Health Services." Princeton University, The Trustees of Princeton University, <https://uhs.princeton.edu/health-resources/ergonomics-computer-use>

"Office Ergonomics: Your How-to Guide." Mayo Clinic, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 23 Apr. 2021, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-life-style/adult-health/in-depth/office-ergonomics/art-20046169>

"What Is the Correct Ergonomic Sitting Posture in the Office?" CMD Ltd, <https://www.cmd-ltd.com/advice-centre/ergonomics/office-ergonomics/>

Contact our experts today to schedule a meeting!



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