



## Home Office Healthy Work Practices

With the current need to work from home many of us have been focusing on getting computers set up and network connections established. It is unlikely you have an ergonomic chair or desk set up at home however it is important to try to set up your working space to allow you to stay healthy while you work.

Here are some ergonomic tips to help you achieve a healthy work set up during these challenging times.

<p><b>Aim for the best working posture</b></p> 	<p><b>AVOID</b></p> 
<p><b>Key tips:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use a chair to allow you to sit upright with <b>head and neck aligned directly over relaxed shoulders and lower spine.</b></li> <li>2. Support your feet flat on the ground or put something under them to allow you to have good foot support. Otherwise you will find yourself sitting forward on the chair with no back support.</li> <li>3. Try to sit back in your chair and be sure to support the lower back. If you need additional lower back/lumbar support, try rolling up a towel or soft blanket and place in the lower lumbar curve.</li> <li>4. Ensure your upper arms hang comfortably at your sides, with elbows at ~90 – 100° when using the keyboard and mouse.</li> <li>5. Keep your wrists straight when using the keyboard. If the desk is too high to allow this, use a cushion and place a support under your feet.</li> <li>6. Use a separate keyboard and mouse and place the laptop on a riser (books, box) to allow you to view the screen with your head upright (not bent forward). Angling the screen also helps with achieving a good neck posture.</li> <li>7. Position the screen at a distance that is easily viewed without leaning forward. Avoid glare on the screen.</li> <li>8. Ensure there are no sharp edges contacting your arms when keyboarding or mousing.</li> <li>9. If an external keyboard and mouse is not available, try too angle the laptop keyboard to keep your arms and wrists neutral.</li> <li>10. Try working in standing for short periods. A counter or breakfast bar often works. Use the same tips above for neck, shoulder and arm postures.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Take frequent breaks</b> Short breaks taken throughout the day help to give working muscles more recovery time. At least once every hour of computer work get up and move around. These breaks are most beneficial when they are brief but frequent, increasing their effectiveness while minimizing impact on productivity. Short micro-breaks for 2-5 seconds where you change your posture should be taken frequently throughout the day. Set up screen reminders.</p>	
<p><b>Stand up when you can</b> An easy way to change posture throughout the day is to stand while on a phone call. Our body responds well to short bursts of activity. If you stand and walk for a few minutes every hour you will notice the difference in how you feel.</p>	
<p><b>Rest your eyes.</b> Try the 20-20-20 Rule: every 20 minutes, take a 20 second break and look 20 feet away.</p>	
<p><b>Take a deep breath.</b> Take the time to give yourself a mental break: set a reminder to breathe deeply, get some fresh air, take your lunch or breaks away from your desk.</p>	

Stay well.....