

Safety Bulletin

Ergonomic tips to maximize your comfort when computing

1. Chair and posture

- Use the backrest of the chair to provide full support to your lower back.
- Make sure your chair allows clearance behind your knees when seated against the backrest

Maintain proper body posture:

- Sit with your hips and knees at a 90-degree or greater angle.
- Keep your feet flat on the floor or on a footrest.
- Keep your arms relaxed at your sides, ideally with elbows at 70 – 135 degrees.
- Change posture frequently. Common postures include upright sitting, reclined sitting, and standing



2. Monitor

- Place the monitor directly in front of you about an arm's length away.
- Position the top of the monitor screen at or below eye level.

3. Keyboard and input devices

- Adjust the keyboard or chair height to keep forearms, wrists, and hands in a straight line.
- Place mouse and other input devices near to and at the same height as your keyboard.
- Keep your elbows close to your body.

4. Work area and lighting

- Allow ample clearance to move your knees and legs under the keyboard and desk.
- Avoid contact stress with edge of the desk and keyboard.

To reduce glare and shadows on your work surface:

- Adjust window shades or decrease overhead lighting.
- Adjust the monitor screen or add an anti-glare filter.
- Add a task light to illuminate paper references.

5. Accessories

- Get a headset if you regularly talk on the phone for extended periods. Use a lowered voice.

Use an adjustable document holder to:

- Place reference materials as close to the computer screen as possible.
- Keep materials at the same height and distance as your computer screen.
- Use your ergonomic accessories to support body posture (e.g. lumbar support, armrests, monitor blocks, external keyboard).

6. Healthy computing habits

- Use softer touch when keying and relax your grip on the mouse.
- Avoid working too long in one position.
- Change your body posture frequently.
- Take frequently breaks and stretch periodically.
- Give your eyes a visual break.

Posture myths

Slouching only makes me look bad; it won't cause long-term damage.

- For every inch that the head moves forward in posture, the weight of the head on the neck is increased by roughly 10 pounds, leading to muscle strain and possible spinal injuries.

Sitting up straight helps decrease pain.

- Getting up at regular intervals is more important than perfect posture. We recommend that you take a break and move every hour while working at your desk.

What does good look like?

- Follow the 90/90/90 rule: have your knees, elbows and hips at 90-degree angles
- Keep your computer monitor at arm's length
- Position your keyboard so you would bend your wrists minimally or not at all
- Keep your elbows and arms relaxed by your sides

As the current pandemic rapidly spread, many employees were not prepared to immediately switch to working from home. You may not have the perfect set-up, ergonomic furniture, or other resources that are readily available at the office. **A few tips can help:**

- Take active breaks, stretch, go for a walk (try setting an alarm on your phone or work calendar)
- Consider connecting your laptop to an external monitor or a TV
- Adjust blinds and curtains in the room to help reduce screen glare
- Use a hands-free headset when talking on the phone; avoid holding the phone between your ear and shoulder
- Move your most used items to within arm's reach
- Substitute pillows for seat cushions
- Practice good sleep hygiene
- If possible, create a dedicated workspace and routine, and follow a similar schedule on workdays
- Stay hydrated

To remind yourself to take an active break, follow [these simple tips while working at your desk](#):

- Pull your shoulder blades together.
- Chin tucks will help release neck tension.
- To [ease the strain on your eyes](#), follow the 20/20/20 rule: Every 20 minutes look up from your screen at an object 20 (or more) feet away, for 20 seconds.
- Additionally, the CDC has created the [Physical Activity Breaks for Workplace Resource Guide](#). Always consult your healthcare provider before beginning any exercise routine