



## Office Ergonomics: Potential Solutions

### HEAD AND NECK

#### *Monitor*

- Raise or lower your monitor so that the top line of text is at eye level.
- Move your monitor so that the distance between your eyes and the monitor is about an arm's length.
- Make sure that you are all in alignment with your monitor and your keyboard.
- Use an in-line document holder to avoid turning your head when viewing documents (available for loan from OHSE office).

#### *Phone*

- Avoid cradling the phone between your head and shoulder.
- Consider wearing a headset if you use the phone frequently.
- Place your phone on the side of your non-dominant hand, to leave your dominant hand free for writing.

### BACK AND LEGS

#### *Chair*

- The area underneath your desk should remain uncluttered to allow room for your legs to move and stretch.
- Don't be afraid to try out the adjustments on your chair (height, tilt, armrests)
- Adjust your backrest tilt and height to help support your back's natural curve.
- Your chair height should allow your feet to sit flat on the floor, or fully supported on a footrest.
- Your knees should be at about hip level, thighs parallel to the floor to form a 90-degree angle with your hips and thighs.
- Sit back in your chair and ensure there is a slight gap between the edge of the seat and the backs of your knees.

### ARMS, WRISTS AND HANDS

#### *Keyboard and Keyboard Tray*

- Don't be afraid to adjust the height and tilt level when you have an articulate keyboard tray installed.
- Keep your elbows close to your body and bent about 90 degrees, with your forearms parallel to the floor.
- Your wrists and hands should be in line with your forearms.
- Use your keyboard tray in a neutral (even) or negative (sloping down) slope.
- Keep your shoulders and upper arms relaxed.
- Use minimum force when striking keys or gripping the mouse.
- Avoid resting wrists, forearms or elbows on sharp edges.



**Mouse**

- Keep your mouse or pointing device close to your keyboard to avoid a long reach.
- Move your hand, wrist and forearm as a unit.
- Use short cuts, keystrokes and custom settings to reduce your workload.

**Chair**

- Adjust your armrests so that your shoulders hang down in a neutral (relaxed) position.

**EYES (LIGHTING AND GLARE)**

**Monitor:**

- Position the monitor at right angles to the windows, and with the screen vertical to reduce glare.
- Position the monitor away from direct overhead light.
- Use blinds and shades to control outside light.
- Adjust the brightness and contrast controls on your monitor so it is comfortable for you.
- Provide supplemental task/desk lighting to adequately illuminate writing and reading tasks while limiting brightness around monitors.

**WORKSTATION DESIGN**

- Your desktop should be arranged so that frequently used items (calculator, stapler, etc) are within close reach.
- Make sure you have enough space to do both computer work and paperwork.
- Make sure that the height of the desk is appropriate for you. If necessary, raisers could be mounted to increase the height.
- Ensure that there is enough alley area in between workstations if you are sharing an office space.

**WORK HABITS**

- Take breaks. Your body needs to rest and recover.
- Taking a break doesn't always mean stopping work. It just means taking a break from the job you are doing to do something else. Incorporate mini-breaks from the computer by making phone calls, photocopies, etc.
- Change your position frequently. Sitting in one position for long periods of time can impede your circulation.
- Pay attention to signs of pain and discomfort. Ignoring these signs can lead to more serious injury, and longer recuperative time.