Ergonomic Tips: Setting-up the Computer Workstation

Office Chair

☐ Adjust the seat height so there is a 90^0 angle at your hips and knees and your feet rest flat on the floor

☐ Adjust the seat depth so your thighs are fully supported and extend no more than 2" past the edge of the seat

☐ Move the backrest or lumbar adjustment up or down until you feel the lumbar support positioned in the lower curve of your spine

☐ Set the angle of the backrest to help you maintain good posture – this angle can be varied throughout the day to provide relief from static positions

☐ Move the armrests up/down/in/out so that the shoulders are **down and relaxed** when the forearms are on the armrests

☐ Set the seat tilt flat (no tilt); however tilting the seat up at the front for short intervals can also help relieve pressure on the lower back

☐ Recline when away from computer work (reading, attending a meeting, on the phone, on a break)

☐ A footrest is an option to help vary the leg position and relieve back tension

Keyboard and Mouse

☐ An adjustable platform should be used, which allows the keyboard and mouse to be at the same height with the mouse directly beside the keyboard

☐ Adjust the tilt on the platform to keep the wrists straight: usually this is flat (0^0) or angled slightly away from you (-3^0 to -5^0)

☐ Avoid using a positive tilt (angled towards you) on the platform or the keyboard

☐ Raise or lower the platform so your arms are in this position:
  ✓ Shoulders: down and relaxed, with arms falling straight down at your sides
  ✓ Elbows: bent between 90^0 to 100^0
  ✓ Wrists: straight

☐ As a general rule: the top of the platform should line up with the top of the chair armrests

☐ Do not rest the hand, wrist or forearm on hard surfaces or sharp edges: this signals a problem with the height of the platform or your chair armrests

☐ During periods of intense mouse use: you can position the mouse more towards the center of your body by sliding the keyboard over a little

☐ If you are reaching too far out to the right side to your mouse: consider mousing with the left hand, or using a compact or left-handed keyboard

Monitor

☐ Place monitor directly in front of you

☐ Set monitor height so the top ¼ of the screen is at horizontal eye level: your eyes should be looking straight or slightly downwards most of the time

☐ If you have reading glasses, progressives, or bifocals: you will have to set the monitor **lower** than the above – make sure you can see nearly whole screen clearly without tilting the head back

☐ Position monitor between 40 to 60cm from your eyes (about an arm's length)

☐ Place monitor at a 90° angle to any windows – this may mean changing the position of your desk

☐ Adjust the tilt to eliminate any glare

Documents

☐ Use a document holder to place reference material beside the monitor or in front just below the monitor

Writing Surface

☐ Ensure there is a writing surface beside your dominant hand while facing the computer

☐ Face the desk straight-on to complete paperwork

☐ Your paperwork surface should be about 2" above your elbow while sitting with arm relaxed

Telephone and Other Equipment

☐ Keep frequently used items within a close reach

☐ Use a headset if you are on the phone frequently, or if you must write or compute while on the phone

☐ If you use a wrist rest, you should not rest heavily on it: if this is occurring, there is likely a problem with your set-up that needs to be addressed

☐ Avoid awkward twisting or reaching: stand, swivel the chair, or reposition equipment