

ERGONOMICS FOR THE REMOTE WORKER



Wellness
Coaches™

Thanks to smartphones, laptops, and tablets, employees are working remotely in places such as airplanes, cars, coffee shops, and even in the convenience of their own homes. That sounds like good news, right? Yes, but there are some concerns. Working remotely brings with it a number of ergonomic issues, as well as health problems.

With just a few preventative measures, you can work comfortably and manage the demands of the workplace from any location.

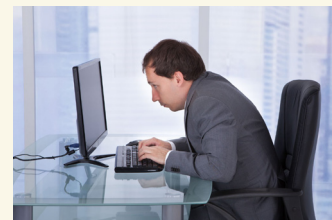
WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF POOR ERGONOMICS?

- **De Quervain's Syndrome** — Inflamed tendons that cause pain on the thumb side of the wrist.
- **Carpal Tunnel Syndrome** — Pressure on the nerve in the wrist that supplies feeling and movement to parts of the hand.
- **RSI (Repetitive Strain Injury)** — Micro tears to a muscle or tendon from repeated movements.
- **Neck Strain** — Pain, tenderness, or stiffness in the neck caused by poor posture and looking down at mobile devices and laptop screens for extended periods.
- **Back Strain** — Stretching or tearing in the muscles that support the spinal cord, possibly due to poor posture..
- **Eye Strain** — Fatigue that occurs in the eye muscles, which are used to focus, and may lead to headaches, neck and shoulder pain, stress, and decreased productivity.

STOP FOR BREAKS, MOVE AROUND, AND STRETCH!

Poor posture and a decrease in physical activity may increase your chances of eye strain, back problems, obesity, cancer, coronary heart disease, and many other health problems.

- RESOURCES: www.osha.gov; www.mayoclinic.org; www.physioadvisor.com



ERGONOMIC TIPS

HOME OR REMOTE OFFICE:

- **Chair** - Should provide lumbar and arm support, and the height should allow the soles of your feet to fall flat on the ground.
- **Desk** - Should be at the proper height to provide enough room for your knees and legs to move around.
- **Keyboard** — Your hands should float naturally above your keyboard without putting strain on your wrists and arms.
- **Screen** - Should be set at a height that keeps your neck in a neutral position throughout the day.
- **Hands-free headset** - Allows you to participate in important calls without straining to hold a phone.

MOBILE DEVICES, TABLETS, AND LAPTOPS:

- **Raise your laptop height with notebooks or a pillow**
- **Raise the level of your mobile device to minimize bending your head down and rounding your shoulders.**
- **Use a portable keyboard or wide grip stylus to minimize texting fatigue.**
- **Avoid glare by positioning your device or laptop so that the screen is perpendicular to windows, close shades and blinds to avoid bright outside light, and avoid working under bright sources of light.**
- **Use the timer or an app on your mobile device to let you know when it is time for a break (take a 2-3 minute break every 15 minutes).**

HOW CAN THESE REMOTE WORKERS IMPROVE THEIR POSTURE?



What can you do today to improve your work ergonomics? _____

COMBAT EYE STRAIN

- 20/20/20 Rule - Every 20 minutes, look 20 ft. away for 20 seconds.
- Enlarge text on your screen.
- BLINK! Blinking hydrates your eyes.
- Clean screens and equipment to eliminate dust and glares.
- Make sure the brightness on your screen is appropriate and remember to dim the screen for nighttime use.
- Imagine you are looking at a very large clock. Keeping your head still, look up as far as you can. This is your 12:00. Take a deep breath then move your eyes to 1:00. Continue all the way back around to 12:00.



TAKE A STRETCH BREAK!



Scapular Retraction

Neck

Chest & Shoulders

Upper Back

Forearm Flexors & Extensors

LIMITED ON SPACE TO STRETCH?

Begin these breathing and stretching exercises by sitting on the edge of your seat with feet hip-width apart and flat on the ground. Extend the crown of the head toward the ceiling, creating an elongated spine.

- **Deep Breathing** — Inhale deeply through the nose, allowing the belly to rise as the air first fills the belly, then the ribs, and finally the chest. Exhale through the nose.
- **Shoulder Rolls** — Roll the shoulders forward and up to your ears and then roll the shoulders back and towards the floor, allowing the shoulder blades to slide down the back. Repeat five times in both directions.
- **Seated Cat and Cow** — Rest hands on your lap or armrest with palms down. Inhale, and bring the chest forward and draw the shoulder blades together, forming a slight back bend into cow pose. Exhale, and bring the belly towards the back of the chair, allowing the shoulders to fall forward into cat pose.
- **Eagle Arms** — Inhale, stretching your arms out to the sides. Exhale, and cross your arms in front of your chest to hug yourself.
- **Seated Child's Pose** — Inhale, and lengthen the spine toward the ceiling. Exhale, and fold forward towards your thighs. Allow the arms to drop to the floor. Breathe deeply and relax for 30 seconds. Inhale as you slowly return to a seated position.
- **Ankle and Wrist Rolls** — Roll ankles and wrists 10 times in clockwise circles. Repeat counter-clockwise.