OFFICE ERGONOMICS TIPS AND GUIDELINES

- **Posture**: Sit back in your chair and do not cross your legs.

- **Height**: Adjust the seat height so your feet are flat on the floor.

- **Back Rest**: Back rests should “hug” the body, but should not restrict movement. Most back rests can be adjusted up and down to suit people of different heights. Check to see if yours adjusts.

- **Arm Rests**: Swing/lower arm rests out of the way when approaching the desktop and keyboard. Do not rest elbows or forearms on the armrests when keyboarding. If they are in your way and do not adjust, have them removed.

- **Seat Tilt**: If this feature is available, tilt the seat forward slightly, so you feel encouraged to sit upright, but not “ejected” out of your chair.

- **Seat Depth**: If this feature is available, allow 2” of space between the edge of the seat and the back of your knees.

**Your Keyboard, Mouse, and Desk. . . .**

- **Height/tilt**: Set the height of your keyboard tray so that your elbows are at 90° and your wrists are in a neutral position when you type. Have someone else watch you type (from the side) if you are unsure. Your keyboard tray should have room for your mouse and your keyboard at the same height. Fold the “legs” of the keyboard underneath the tray so that the keyboard lays flat, parallel to the floor.

- **Distance**: Find a comfortable working distance. If you are too close or too far, your arms, neck, and shoulders will fatigue quickly. Keep the area under your desk clear so you can get close to it. Keep all frequently used items within 45° to your right or left and no more than an arm’s length away.
**Keyboarding:** Tap the keys lightly. Do not rest your wrists on the keyboard tray when keyboarding! When you are not keyboarding, it is okay to rest the fleshy part of your palm on the tray.

**Using the mouse:** Relax your fingers, use your whole arm to move the mouse, and do not rest your wrist on the mouse pad while mousing. You may rest the fleshy part of your palm on the mouse pad when you are not using the mouse. Avoid using the same hand to operate the mouse all the time.

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**Your monitor. . . .**

**Height:** Place your monitor directly on your desktop. The first line of type on your computer should be at or slightly below eye level. A riser or stack of paper may be placed under the monitor if it is too low (for taller people). The chair or desk height may have to be adjusted if it is too high (shorter people).

**Distance:** The monitor should be approximately 25” or an arm’s length away from you.

**Tilt:** The screen should be positioned vertically to reduce the glare from overhead lighting.

**Location:** Your monitor should be directly in front of you and your keyboard. It should not be off to the side. If you often use your computer while you have clients in your office, position your monitor so you do not have to turn your head more than 45° to see your clients.

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**Your eyes. . . .**

**Glasses:** If you wear glasses, talk to your optometrist about glasses for computer users.

**20-20-20:** Every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away, for at least 20 seconds.

**Don’t forget to blink!** People tend to blink less when they use computers.

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**Your work habits. . . .**

**Breaks:** Take all regularly scheduled breaks and MOVE. Take the stairs, walk around and stretch.
• **Breathe:** Take a deep breath between phone calls. This will help to relieve tension and provide oxygen to tired muscles. Outside of work, eat right, exercise, and get plenty of rest!

**Desk Exercises You Can Do While You Work. . . .**

Arms. . . . Stretch your arms up in the air and to the sides between calls.

**Shoulders. . . .** Roll your shoulders forwards and back. Lift your shoulders up to your ears and breathe in, drop your shoulders and exhale.

**Hands. . . .** Spread your fingers wide apart, hold for 5 seconds and relax. Gently shake the tension out of your hands.

**Legs. . . .** Extend your legs under your desk and roll your ankles.

**Neck. . . .** Gently tilt your head from side to side and look left to right.

**Common Problems and Likely Causes. . . .**

This not an all-inclusive list, but a guideline you can use if you start to experience discomfort in a specific area. Please feel free to contact Employee Health and Wellness Services if the problem does not resolve itself quickly.

**Pain in wrists and hands**
- Keyboard is too high, too low, too close, or too far.
- Striking keys too hard.
- Using side-to-side wrist movements to operate mouse.
- Overuse of one hand.
- Resting wrists while keyboarding/mousing.
- Using arm rests while keyboarding/mousing.

**Sore neck and upper back**
- Monitor is too high or too low.
- Typing by sight instead of by touch.
- Keyboard is too high or too low.
- Slouching.
- Arm rests are too high.
- Stress and tension.
- Staying in one position for too long.
- Chair not adjusted to provide back support.
Sore/stiff low back
- Chair is too low.
- Crossing legs while sitting.
- Slouching.
- Back rest is not supporting back.

Aching legs
- Staying in one position too long.
- Poor circulation (see your doctor)

Sore/tired eyes
- Monitor is too close or too far.
- Lack of blinking.
- Staring at something for too long.
- Inappropriate eyewear.
- Too much glare from overhead lighting.