Preventing Work Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WMSDs) at the Keyboard



If you spend a lot of time at the computer then proper wrist and hand positions, a supported posture, and movement are the keys to your ongoing comfort. Working in non- stressful or neutral postures reduces the pressure on your nerves and tendons and keeps your muscles relaxed.

Here are some simple things you can do to increase your comfort level at the computer:

#1 – KEEP YOUR WRISTS STRAIGHT.

Adjust your keyboard height or your chair height so that your wrist is lined up with your forearm, not bent up or down or to the side.

#2 – ENSURE YOUR CHAIR IS CORRECTLY ADJUSTED.

- Adjust your back rest so that your lower back is supported.
- Adjust your chair height so that your feet are supported on the floor or on a footrest and your wrists are straight.
- Adjust your seat pan angle and chair height so that your knees are at or below the level of your hips.

#3 – KEEP YOUR HEAD AND NECK IN A NEUTRAL POSTURE.

The monitor should be directly in front of your keyboard and the monitor viewing area should be at or slightly below eye level. If you have to lean forward to see your screen, move it closer (and consider getting an eye exam). If you are on the phone and computer at the same time, consider a head set. Place reference documents in close proximity to the monitor, or utilize an in-line document holder between the monitor and the keyboard.

#4 – KEEP YOUR ELBOWS CLOSE TO YOUR BODY AND YOUR SHOULDERS RELAXED.

Reduce reaches to frequently used items. Make sure your keyboard and mouse are on the same level and place the mouse as close to the keyboard as possible.

#5 – MOVE!

Movement is one of the best ways to increase comfort at the keyboard. Stand up when talking on the phone, walk to the printer, or take a quick stretch break.