Ergonomics: While Working Remotely

Working in awkward positions for prolonged periods during the day can cause discomfort in several areas of your body depending on your position and the repetitiveness of the task. Here are a few tips to make your remote work location as comfortable as possible.



Screen Position

Using a Laptop: Raise your laptop screen to eye level and use books, boxes, etc., under the laptop to hold the screen in place. You will then need to use an external keyboard and mouse on the desk. Please see the following videos for additional information on home office set-up tips while using a laptop: Laptop Ergonomics [1] and Travel Ergonomics [2].

Using a Monitor: If you have a monitor available, be sure that your monitor is raised to eye level approximately an arm's length away and the keyboard and mouse are at the edge of the desk. The mouse should be located close to the keyboard, so your elbow is close to your body. Bifocal or progressive lens users may need their screen lower, to avoid tipping the head back.



Keyboard/Arm Position

Find a chair and table that allows your arms to rest comfortably by your side, while your upper arm and forearm are at a 90-degree angle. If your chair is not adjustable, you will need to lower your keyboard to elbow level (i.e. laptop table, card table, tv tray table).

Chair

There should be 2-3 fingers distance between the front edge of the seat and the back of your legs. If there is not enough clearance, locate a cushion to place behind your back to bring you closer to the edge of the seat. If your chair leans too far back, place a pillow between your upper back and chair to support your upper back. For your low back, a rolled towel or small cushion can be placed between the chair and your lower back to support your lumbar curve.



Foot Support

Ensure your feet are supported firmly on the ground. If your feet are dangling, place a footrest or a box under your feet. If your feet are on the floor and your knees are too high (higher than your hips), use a taller chair or a sit on a cushion to raise your torso.

Remember to Move

Although important all year long, it is especially important to move during the day when your office ergonomics may not be ideal. Set an alarm for every 20 minutes to remind yourself to stand, walk and do a few stretches. Download an ergonomics app on your phone or set these reminders in your outlook calendar or phone.



Additional Resources

For additional ergonomics information please visit:

- Remember the Basics - Sitting [3]
- Stretching@Work [4]
- Ergonomics Guidelines and Videos [5]

Source
URL:https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/occupational-health-and-wellness-ohw/ohw-programs/ergonomic-services/ergonomic-guidelines-1

Links
[1] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLwIP8cBaWA [2] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wgQJh-vU4hk [3] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/sites/default/files/Office-Ergonomics-Sitting.pdf [4] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/sites/default/files/Stretching-at-Work.pdf [5] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/ergonomic-guidelines-and-videos