



TELECOMMUTING ERGONOMICS

Working remotely can present unique ergonomic challenges as there are several barriers to achieving the neutral postures necessary in the computer workstation setup. Below are some tips to prevent repetitive stress injury or discomfort while telecommuting.

Designated work area

- Select a designated work area carefully. While it may be tempting to work from the comfort of your bed or bent over a coffee table, choosing a standard table will foster better overall body positioning.

Lighting

- Too much light or glare can cause discomfort. If there is a window in your workspace, sit perpendicular to it, or close the blinds to avoid glare.
- Insufficient light can strain your eyes. If there is limited light in your workspace, place task lighting angled behind your screen.

Chair selection

- Couches provide no stability. Stiff chairs may cause discomfort in the back and buttocks. Use a comfortable chair. Add lumbar support at the “S” curve of the spine.
- If available, use an adjustable chair to achieve a 90-degree bend in the knee or wider.
- If the chair is too high, prop up your feet to an appropriate height.
- If the chair is too low, extend your feet to promote circulation or sit on a cushion.

Technology tips

- If possible, temporarily bring your monitor, keyboard, and mouse home for extended periods of telecommuting.
- When using a laptop, elevate the screen to just below your line of vision and connect the additional keyboard and mouse for an ideal height while typing.
- For tablet or mobile phone use:
 - Continuously change your grip posture to ensure load rotation.
 - Alternate between use of thumb and finger to reduce repetitive motions.
 - Use your phone’s hands-free option to eliminate awkward postures.
 - Increase the font size to avoid eye strain.
 - Utilize voice recognition and/or text-to-speech mobile applications.
- If electronically capable, use a mobile adapter (equipped with HDMI, VGA, USB and network connection) that can be connected to an alternative display device.

Ergonomic reminders

- Be aware of your posture and maintain neutral positioning.
- Take a 1-2 minute break every 30 minutes to stretch.
- Take advantage of any opportunity to move your body and maintain adequate blood flow, e.g. use a hands-free option to stand or walk while on the phone.



FACT SHEET

Program: Ergonomics

- Give your eyes a break from the screen and reduce eye fatigue by following the 20-20-20 rule; look 20 feet away for 20 seconds every 20 minutes.