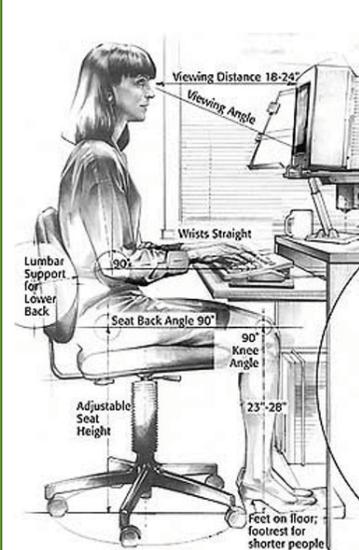


Benefits of an Ergonomic Workstation

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Workplace injuries are a primary concern for employers and their employees. Missing work due to injury is detrimental to the employee and the organization.

Ergonomics is a science concerned with designing and arranging things so people and things interact most safely and efficiently. This includes proper lifting techniques to avoid back injury and fatigue, or proper arrangement of a workstation to avoid muscle cramps and aches or more serious injuries, such as musculoskeletal disorders.



Employees who work at a computer are at high risk of developing injury due to repetitive movement. An ergonomic workstation greatly reduces the risk of office injury, encourages good posture, and provides the least amount of stress on the body while allowing the worker to be productive and efficient.

This article will focus on how to arrange a proper and ergonomically friendly workstation.

Office Chair

Buy a chair with an adjustable seat height, adjustable back angle with lumbar support, and with arm rests. All three are important to reduce strain and injury while lumbar support for the lower back will decrease back fatigue.

To adjust the chair, first, set the seat height so the employee's knees have an angle between 90 and 110 degrees, with the feet resting flat on the floor or a footrest, and the thighs parallel to the floor. Second, set the back angle so the hips of the em-

ployee are at a 90 degree angle. Third, adjust armrests low enough to not interfere with mouse use.

Computer Monitor

Place the monitor directly in front of the keyboard at a height so the eyes land on the top 1/3 of the screen while looking straight forward. This will reduce the risk of neck and shoulder pain. Also, place the monitor at a comfortable distance from the employee to reduce eye strain.

Keyboard & Mouse

Some of the most common computer-related injuries, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, come from improper placement of the keyboard and mouse.

First, buy an adjustable tray for the keyboard and mouse. Second, adjust the tray at a proper height so the elbows of the worker are at a 90 degree angle while the wrists remain straight and relaxed. Third, place the mouse at the same height as the keyboard and within easy reach. Elbows should be at the workers side and close to the body while working.

Having a properly set up keyboard and mouse greatly reduces strain on the workers elbows, forearms, wrists, hands, and fingers.

Breaks

Take frequent breaks throughout the day to stretch and refocus. Stretch your back, neck, wrists, and forearms to reduce stress and allow work to be more comfortable for longer periods of time.

A properly designed and arranged workspace is worth the time and effort to create. It will lead to less discomfort, more productivity, and an overall more enjoyable work place.

References:

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