

## Computer Workstation Safety Checklist

Use this workstation safety checklist to help prevent Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) among employees who spend long hours at the computer.

MSDs, like carpal tunnel, are a problem for employees who work all day on a computer. Risk factors include primarily:

- **Repetition**—the daily and lengthy use of a keyboard and mouse or trackpad.
- **Awkward postures**—extending arms to type, hunching shoulders, and sitting for long periods.

A properly designed and arranged computer workstation can go a long way toward preventing MSDs. Use the following checklist to help evaluate the safety and comfort of computer workstations:

**WORKING POSTURES**—Is your computer workstation designed or arranged so that it allows your:

- Head and neck to be upright, or in-line with the torso (not bent down/back)?
- Head, neck, and trunk to face forward (not twisted)?
- Trunk to be perpendicular to floor (may lean back into backrest but not forward)?
- Shoulders and upper arms to be in line with the torso, generally about perpendicular to the floor and relaxed (not elevated or stretched forward)?
- Upper arms and elbows to be close to the body (not extended outward)?
- Forearms, wrists, and hands to be straight and in line (forearm at about 90 degrees to the upper arm)?
- Wrists and hands to be straight (not bent up/down or sideways toward the little finger)?
- Thighs to be parallel to the floor and the lower legs to be perpendicular to floor (thighs may be slightly elevated above knees)?
- Feet rest flat on the floor or are supported by a stable footrest?

**SEATING**—Is the chair designed so that the:

- Backrest provides support for the lower back (lumbar area)?
- Seat width and depth accommodate the specific user (seat pan not too big/small)?
- Seat front does not press against the back of knees and lower legs (seat pan not too long)?
- Seat has cushioning and is rounded with a "waterfall" front (no sharp edge)?
- Armrests, if used, support both forearms while the user performs computer tasks and do not interfere with movement?

**KEYBOARD/INPUT DEVICE**—Is the keyboard/input device designed or arranged for doing computer tasks so that the:

- Keyboard/input device platform(s) is stable and large enough to hold a keyboard and an input device?
- Input device (mouse or trackball) is located right next to keyboard so it can be operated without reaching?
- Input device is easy to activate and the shape/size fits hand (not too big/small)?
- Wrists and hands do not rest on sharp or hard edges?

*When we share the responsibility for safety in the workplace, everyone wins!!*

**MONITOR**—Is the monitor designed or arranged for computer tasks so that:

- The top of the screen is at or below eye level so users can read it without bending head or neck down/back?
- Users with bifocals/trifocals can read the screen without bending the head or neck backward?
- The monitor distance allows user to read the screen without leaning head, neck or trunk forward/backward?
- The monitor position is directly in front of user so that he or she doesn't have to twist the head or neck?
- Glare (for example, from windows or lights) is not reflected on screen, which can cause user to assume an awkward posture to clearly see information on the screen?

**WORK AREA**—Is the work area designed or arranged for doing computer tasks so that the user's:

- Thighs have sufficient clearance space between the top of the thighs and computer table/keyboard platform (thighs are not trapped)?
- Legs and feet have sufficient clearance space under the work surface so user is able to get close enough to the keyboard/input device?

### **ACCESSORIES**

- Is the document holder, if provided, stable and large enough to hold documents?
- Is the document holder, if provided, placed at about the same height and distance as the monitor screen so there is little head movement, or need to re-focus, when user looks from the document to the screen?
- Is the wrist/palm rest, if provided, padded and free of sharp or square edges that push on wrists?
- Does the wrist/palm rest, if provided, allow user to keep his/her keep your forearms, wrists, and hands straight and in line when using the keyboard/input device?
- Is a telephone headset provided so that user can work with head upright (not bent) and shoulders relaxed (not elevated) when doing computer tasks and talking on telephone at the same time?

### **GENERAL**

- Do workstation and equipment have sufficient adjustability so users are in a safe working posture and can make occasional changes in posture while performing computer tasks?
- Are computer workstation, components, and accessories maintained in serviceable condition so that they function properly?
- Are computer tasks organized in a way that allows users to vary tasks with other work activities, or to take micro-breaks or recovery pauses while at the computer workstation?

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