

# “OPTIMIZING THE HOME OFFICE FOR *YOUR* WELL-BEING”

Kelsey Toeppe, OTRL

University of Michigan

Medical Ergonomics

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# OBJECTIVES

- To understand why it is important for your workspace to work for you.
- To understand basic ergonomic principles to reduce risk factors for discomfort or injury.
- To understand and apply basic ergonomic assessment skills in your workspace.
- To identify factors in your workspace which may be contributing to discomfort or inefficiency.
- To identify existing resources within your home which could improve fit of your workspace based on your needs.

*Note: This presentation provides general information and is not a substitute for medical advice. Always seek medical advice from your physician or other qualified provider regarding you condition.*

# THE NEW WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Where is everyone working?
  - Kitchen table, couch, bed, counter, outside, home office.
- Who are your new co-workers?
  - Sharing workspaces with other household members.
  - Now working where you also live, eat, sleep.
  - New distractions and other environmental factors.
- Ergonomics: “an applied science concerned with designing and arranging things people use so that the people and things interact most efficiently and safely.”
- The Goal: Striving to find a work-life balance and a working environment that works for you!

# WHY DOES IT HURT?

- Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD) are injuries or disorders that affect muscles, tendons, ligaments, bones, joints, nerves, and spinal discs.
- Risk factors include repetition, contact stress, force and awkward postures.
- Common MSD's include: back or neck pain, carpal tunnel, tendonitis, arthritis, sprains, strains, tears.
- Symptoms include: pain, stiffness, swelling, dull aches.
- It is important to see your doctor for appropriate diagnosis and treatment if you are experiencing symptoms.

Sources:

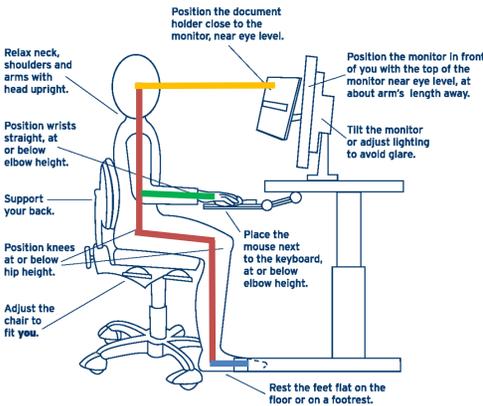
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Workplace Health Promotion. "Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders & Ergonomics"  
<https://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/health-strategies/musculoskeletal-disorders/index.html>

Healthline. Musculoskeletal Disorders. "What are Musculoskeletal Disorders" <https://www.healthline.com/health/musculoskeletal-disorders#symptoms>

# OFFICE ERGONOMICS

**M** | ERGONOMICS  
healthy | AWARENESS

## TEN TIPS FOR COMPUTER USERS



The diagram shows a person sitting at a desk with a computer monitor and keyboard. Various parts of the body and workstation are highlighted with colored lines and labeled with ergonomic tips. A yellow line indicates the neck and shoulder area, a green line indicates the wrist and forearm area, a red line indicates the back and knee area, and a blue line indicates the feet. The monitor is tilted back, and the keyboard is positioned to the left of the mouse.

Relax neck, shoulders and arms with head upright.

Position wrists straight, at or below elbow height.

Support your back.

Position knees at or below hip height.

Adjust the chair to fit you.

Position the document holder close to the monitor, near eye level.

Position the monitor in front of you with the top of the monitor near eye level, at about arm's length away.

Tilt the monitor or adjust lighting to avoid glare.

Place the mouse next to the keyboard, at or below elbow height.

Rest the feet flat on the floor or on a footrest.

**MOST IMPORTANT!**  
Stretch or walk at least once per hour and keep moving throughout the day.

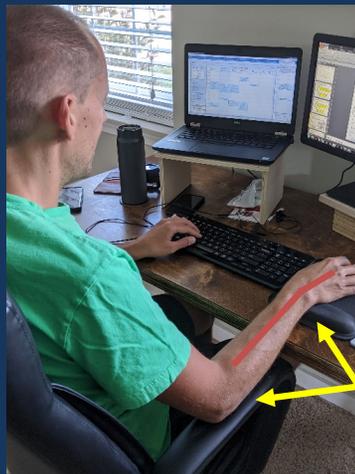
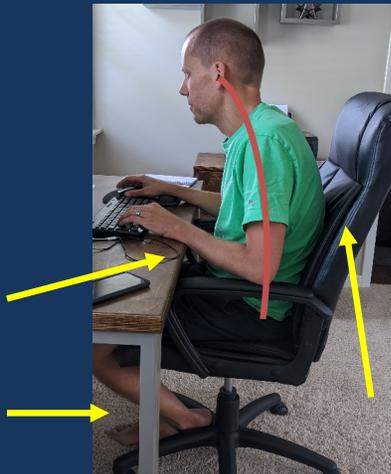
**MHealthy.umich.edu**

Adapted from 12 Golden Tips for Office Workers, 1996  
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- 90 degree angles at hips, knees and ankles.
- Feet flat on the floor.
- 1-2 finger-width of clearance behind knees.
- Elbows bent to 90 degrees and close to the body.
- Wrists straight working just below elbow height.
- Top of monitor positioned at eye level and arm's reach away.
  - Exception for multi-lens glasses
- Standing desks.
- Move every 30-60 minutes for at least 2-3 minutes!

# ASSESSING YOUR SPACE

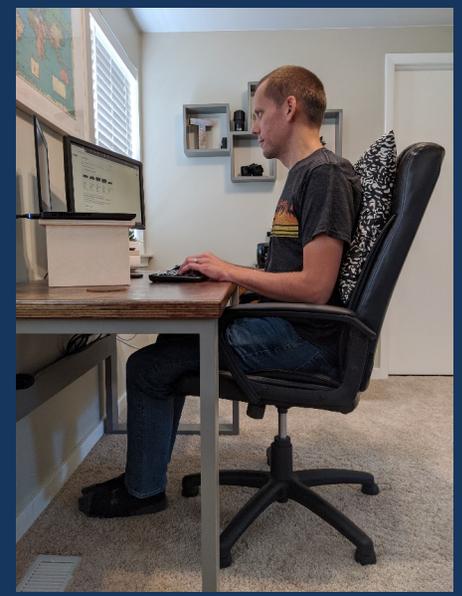
- It's difficult to see yourself while you are working.
- Ask a family member to take some candid pictures throughout the day.
- If you live alone, maybe get creative by propping your phone and using a timer.
- Take a look and what do you notice?



# TAKE A LOOK AROUND

- Pillows
- Rolled towels or blankets
- Stack of books, 3-ring binder, cake pan, box or storage tote
- TV tray or ironing board
- External keyboard or mouse
- External monitor or television
- Craft foam
- Grip kitchen/shelf liner
- Bungee cord, bent

# BEFORE AND AFTER



## OTHER TIPS!

- Reduce clutter in workspace.
  - Three zone of reach
- Utilize noise-canceling headphone if noise or other distractions are a barrier.
- Utilize headphones or the speakerphone option for calls instead of cradling phone with shoulder.
- Consider your light sources and adjust to reduce glare and eye strain.
- Follow the 20-20-20 rule.
  - Every twenty minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- Adjust your screen or zoom in to increase font size on small monitors.
- Adjust your screen brightness for comfort.

# JUST KEEP MOVING!

- Sit, Stand, Walk, Repeat!
  - Sit for no more than 30-60 minutes at a time.
  - Stand for no more than 15 minutes at a time.
  - Walk for *at least* 2-3 minutes each hour.
- Use an alarm or timer to stay accountable and then act on the beep every time!

# HELP!

- If you are having trouble with your current workspace, we are here to help!
- Our website has self-help tools as well as links to follow for individualized support.

<https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health-well-being/mhealthy/faculty-staff-well-being/ergonomics-awareness>

# WRAP UP

- Thank you for attending, I hope you found this presentation informative and valuable.
- Are there any questions?
- If you have follow-up questions, feel free to email me at [hewittke@med.umich.edu](mailto:hewittke@med.umich.edu)