“OPTIMIZING THE HOME OFFICE FOR YOUR WELL-BEING”

Kelsey Toeppe, OTRL
University of Michigan
Medical Ergonomics
October 1st, 2020
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 your 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?

- Muskuloskeletal 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:

OFFICE ERGONOMICS

- 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