Guidelines For Ergonomic Workstation Set Up

***Chair***: Sit all the way back in the chair. This may not be possible all the time, however periodically lean back so that the back is supported by the backrest. The height should be adjusted so that the thighs are parallel to the floor. The hips can be slightly above the knees, but not below. If the chair cannot be adjusted to the correct height, get a cushion (to sit higher) or possibly a new chair. Armrests, if used, should be adjusted so that the elbows/forearms are supported by the armrests when the arms are at the sides while using the mouse and keyboard. Again, this may not always be possible, but placing the arms even part of the time on the armrests provides rest for the shoulders.

***Monitor:*** The monitor should be positioned directly in front of the user, to avoid working with the neck and/or back twisted. The top 1/3rd or so of the monitor should be around eye level when looking straight ahead, though bifocal users can position the monitor slightly lower. Generally, the monitor should be about an arm’s length away, give or take, to avoid eyestrain and forward head postures. For those that type from documents most of the time, a document holder is recommended. This should be placed at the same height and distance as the monitor, if possible. If glare is an issue, re-position the monitor, close the blinds or shades, or use a glare reducing cover over the screen.

***Keyboard:*** Sit as close to the keyboard as possible so that the upper arms are in line with the torso. The keyboard height should be adjusted as to allow the forearms to be parallel to the floor, or as close as possible to this position. The position of the keyboard should allow the wrists to be in a neutral position, in line with the forearms, with minimal bend up or down.

***Mouse:*** Ideally the mouse is positioned at the same height as the keyboard and next to it, thus eliminating awkward reaches for the mouse. For those that use a mouse frequently, non-dominant hand mouse use may be recommended, especially for those having issues with the dominant hand. Mouse buttons can be reversed to do this—ask your IT department if you are unsure how to make this change through Windows control panel. Though this takes getting used to, it re-distributes the workload by reducing the amount of work performed by the dominant hand.

***Take breaks:*** Offset static postures by periodically standing and stretching for brief (10-30 seconds) periods of time during the workday, at least once every 30-60 minutes if you haven’t been up otherwise. Moving a printer, so that you are required to stand to retrieve documents, is another strategy for incorporating movement into the workday. Take advantage of coffee breaks and lunch breaks to stand, stretch and move.

***More information:*** <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/checklist.html>



