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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Set Up Your Computer Station Properly!

As you may have noticed, occupations in today's workforce that require physical labor are decreasing in number. They are being replaced by faster and more efficient computer based equipment. Due to this, the average employee is spending much more time seated in front of a computer or monitor. This has already happened in our local mills, such as Ardeu Wood Products, Aspen Planers, and Tolko. Also, as the number of households that have computers is increasing in leaps and bounds every year, people are spending even more time at home in front of the computer. Whether your computer is at home or at work, you need to make sure that your computer workstation is set up properly. Many repetitive strain injuries such as shoulder/arm tendinitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, neck pain, and upper back pain are directly related to an improperly set-up computer workstation. To start with, make these few modifications:

- 1) In regards to the monitor, the height of the screen is important. The top level of the written text should be at your eye level (refer to diagram 1). If it is too low, stack something (old books) under it to raise it. If the monitor is too low, it will cause neck stiffness and possibly headaches.
- 2) The distance between your eyes and the screen should be about an arm's length -33 to 70 centimeters (refer to diagram 1). Being too close or far away will cause eye strain.

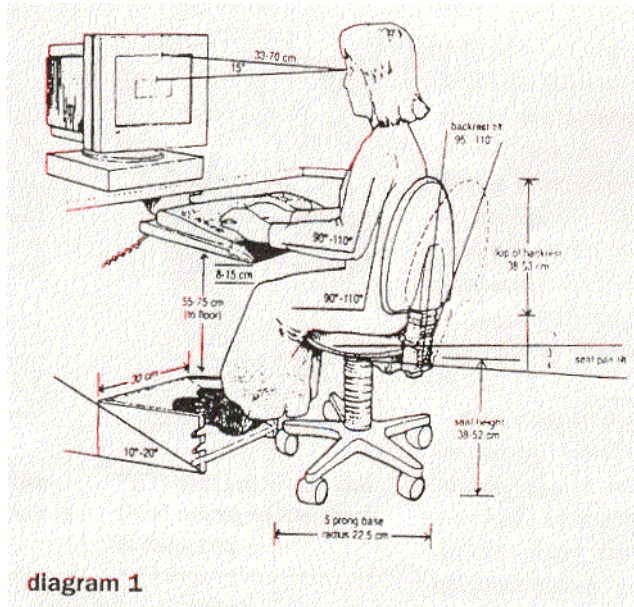


diagram 1

- 3) If your keyboard is at the proper height, you should be able to type without bending the wrists backwards (refer to diagram 1 and 2). If your wrists are bent backwards, put a spongy support under the wrists and palms. These can be purchased at any office supply store. You can also fold in the little legs that are under the keyboard. This will level out the keyboard and maintain the wrists in a neutral position. If the wrists are kept in an improper position, tendinitis of the forearm will likely arise.
- 4) When using a mouse, be sure your wrist is not angled left or right (refer to diagram 3). This will cause tendinitis or carpal tunnel if done incorrectly.

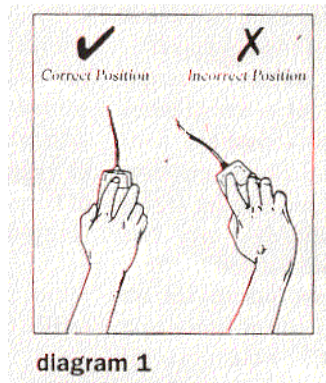


diagram 1

- 5) If you are typing while reading from a piece of paper or book that is lying on your desk, do not have it placed too far to the left or right. It should be leaned in an upright position and relatively close to you (refer to diagram 4). When you have your head turned too far one way for a prolonged period of time, the neck will inevitably get sore.
- 6) Be sure you are using a quality chair. The backrest should give good lumbar support and be angled 95 to 110 degrees. If the chair has armrests, they should support the elbows lightly. The elbows should be bent at 90 to 110 degrees. The shoulders should be in a comfortable position and hanging

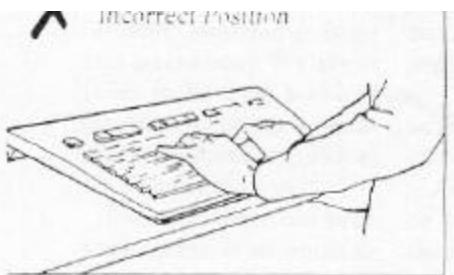


Diagram 2

loosely, not in a shrug position. Do not let the shoulders roll forward, as this will allow the back to slouch (refer to diagram 1 for all of these measurements).

Try to make these changes to your computer workstation. You will notice a difference immediately and it will help prevent the chronic problems such as tendinitis or carpal tunnel syndrome. Chiropractors are treating many patients with neck, wrist, forearm, shoulder, and upper back problems that are mostly related to how their computer workstations are set up. As I mentioned before, the best cure for these problems is prevention.