

Workplace Ergonomics

Do you ever leave work with back pain, wrist pain, or stiff shoulders? The problem may be easy to fix. By making a few simple changes in your workspace you can avoid the stresses on your body that lead to pain and discomfort.

Over time ergonomic-related stresses on your body may injure your muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, and spinal discs.

These type of injuries, called **musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)** include:

- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Rotator cuff syndrome
- Sciatica
- Tendonitis
- Herniated spinal disc
- Low back pain
- Chronic neck pain

Symptoms of **MSDs** include:

- Pain in joints, wrists, shoulders, forearms, knees
- Swelling or inflammation
- Stiffness
- Pain, tingling, or numbness in hands or feet
- Back or neck pain
- Shooting or stabbing pain
- Loss of coordination or strength in the hands
- Burning sensation

MSDs may develop with:

Repetition – This can occur with long hours of typing.

Awkward Positions – Repeated or prolonged squatting, kneeling, bending, twisting, reaching, etc.

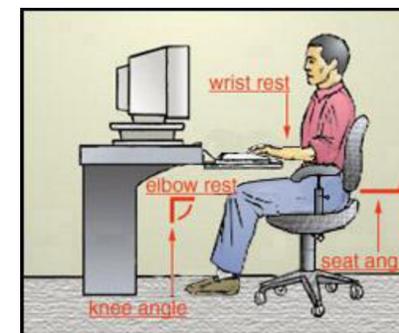
Physical Exertions – This can occur with jobs requiring heavy lifting or maintaining control of tools.

Contact Stress – This can occur when too much pressure is placed on nerves, tendons, or blood vessels.

Vibration – Sanders, grinders, chippers, routers, drills, saws, may lead to nerve damage and pain if used for prolonged periods of time.

Tips to improve workplace ergonomics

1. **Use good posture.** Avoid leaning forward at your workspace. Instead bring the computer monitor or keyboard closer to you and position the monitor straight in front of you. This will reduce stress on your shoulders, back, and neck. Wrists should be in a neutral position. Consider use of wrist supports.
2. **Make your seat comfy.** Position your chair height so that your wrists are in a neutral position and so that your feet are squarely on the ground. Adjust the backrest if needed. Consider using a small pillow.
3. **Adjust your monitor.** Position the monitor so you can see clearly without straining, so that it is just below eye-level, minimize glare, and adjust the contrast and brightness.
4. **Consider a document holder.** Place it close to the monitor screen, at the same eye-level, height and distance.



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