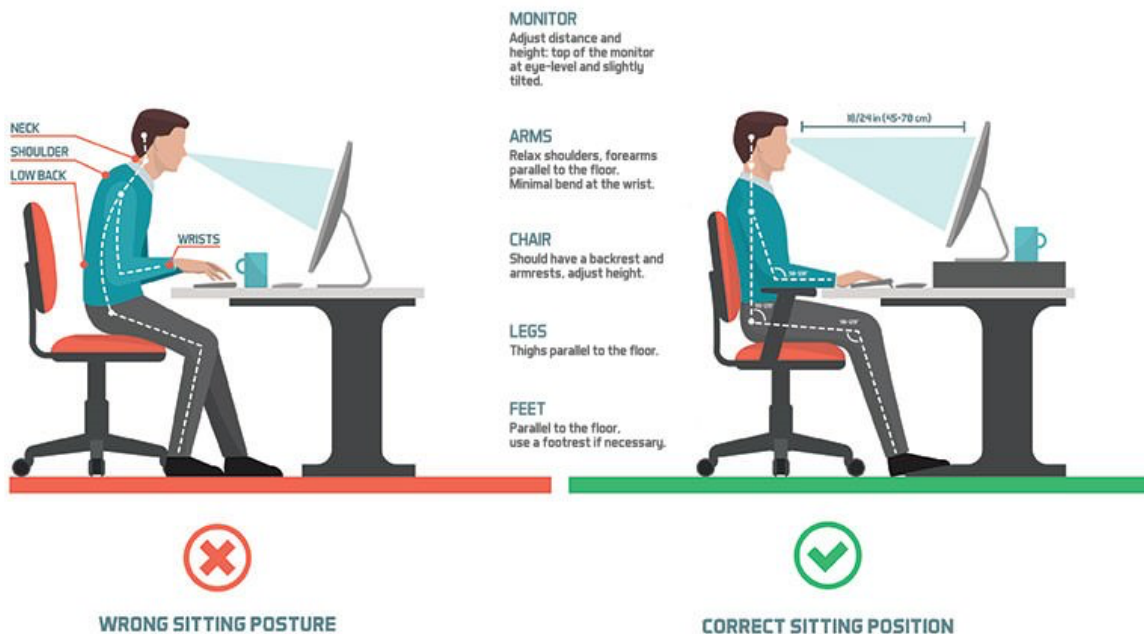


Ergonomic Tips and Tricks to Consider while Working from Home

As countless organizations convert to a work-from-home strategy, many employees are literally creating a pain in their own necks. While many employees may be accustomed to working at the kitchen table for a couple hours over weekends, most probably aren't used to completing weeks of work from their home office. The vast majority of employees don't have a proper home office set-up intended for work-from-home over extended periods of time. Here are some tips and information that can help you stay comfortable working from home while avoiding back/ necks strains and pain.

1. Evaluate your laptop/computer/monitor

Your screen or monitor can be the biggest source of your ergonomic issues and concerns. If you're able to, you should work from a home computer rather than using a laptop. Using a home computer means a larger monitor, separated keyboard/mouse, and usually a larger working space. If you need two monitors, try connecting your laptop, tv, or extra monitor to your computer through an HDMI cord.



While setting up your monitor, try to leave an arm's length distance between yourself and the screen. This helps prevent strain on the eyes, and puts your arms in a more comfortable typing position. Try to raise or lower your monitor so that the top of the screen sits about 3 inches above the top of your head. This keeps the screen right in view so you're not putting too much stress on your neck while you sit in a neutral posture. If you need to adjust the height of your screen, try using some resources around the house such as a box, books, etc. If you don't have any way to adequately adjust the height you can also purchase a relatively inexpensive laptop riser online.

2. Utilize an extra keyboard/mouse when possible

If you don't have a home computer, try to sync-up an external mouse and keyboard to your computer. Situate the mouse and keyboard just below elbow height. (While your arms are at your sides and elbows bent at 90 degrees your fingers should just reach their position on your keyboard.)

3. Seating

Evaluate your seating at your chair and desk. Your feet should just reach the floor or a footrest that's below you. Adjust the chair so that lumbar support is slightly below your waistline. (If your chair doesn't provide lumbar support, try using a rolled-up towel or throw pillow for lumbar support) While seated you should find a two to four-inch gap between the back of your knees and your chair.

As you examine your seating and lumbar support, also consider your posture. While many people believe proper posture is sitting up straight at 90 degrees, you should actually have a slight recline while seated. Reclining your seat about 10-15 degrees results in the best posture, because it takes the unnecessary pressure off of your hips.

The last process to evaluate in regards to your seating is your desk or work station. The average desk sits around 30 inches tall, but should vary dependent on the individual's height. The average kitchen table sits higher than this, which means most people should be raising their seats if working from that location. While you raise your seat it's important to keep your feet positioning in mind. Your feet should just reach the floor in a position that allows them to rest while still pumping blood. The best position for this results in your knees bent in a 90-degree position.

4. Move/Stretch

One of the best advantages of working from home is that you can do whatever you want in your house with privacy. Take advantage of this secluded time to care for your body in ways that may be inappropriate in an office setting. Do some stretches, take a walk, or convert to a standing desk for an hour or so. (Some ways to do this while at home would be using a book shelf, boxes, stands, etc.)

It's recommended that you don't sit in the same position for more than 20-30 minutes without standing, stretching, or some physical movement.

