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| **Office Ergonomics Helps Reduce Strains, Sprains and Pains**Ergonomics is the science of designing jobs, equipment, and workplaces to fit the worker’s needs. Proper ergonomics is necessary to prevent repetitive strain injuries and musculoskeletal disorders which develop over time and can cause pain and both short and long-term disability. Effective office ergonomics helps reduce strains, sprains and pains associated with working in a minimal movement range.Here are some hints and tips to keep in mind when adjusting your office workstation:**CHAIR POSITION*** Ensure the height of the seat pan is just below your kneecap when standing.
* Sit in the chair with feet flat on the floor, or on a footrest, ensure there is about 2 inches of space between the edge of the seat pan and the back of your calves.
* Ensure your joints (knees, hips, ankles) are slightly open (more than a 90-degree angle).
* Adjust the height of the backrest to allow the lumbar support to fit in the ‘hollow’ of your back (where your spine curves inwards).
* If your chair has armrests, ensure that your elbows sit comfortably at 90 degrees and are close to your sides.
* Armrests may be removed if a 90-degree angle is not attainable, or if the armrest elevate your elbows/shoulders (this will create tension in the neck and shoulders).
* Keep your head and neck aligned with the spine.

**MONITORS*** Computer screens should be about arm’s length away or just over.
* Dominate work should be directly in front of you (i.e. computer screen, phone, priority documents).
* Tilt computer screens slightly downwards to avoid glare and looking up for long periods of time. This will avoid neck strain.
* Top of the computer screen should be 2 inches above your eyes. Our line of sight naturally falls either straight ahead or about 45 degrees downwards, meaning the middle of your monitor.

**DESK, MOUSE AND KEYBOARD*** Ensure the area under your desk is clutter free to allow for comfortable leg room.
* Keep your keyboard and mouse close together to minimize overreaching for your mouse.
* You should be able to reach your keyboard while your elbows are bent at 90 degrees, meaning it shouldn’t be too far away, or too high up, position yourself accordingly.

**PHONE*** Do not cradle the phone handset between your ear and shoulder, utilize a headset or speakerphone.
* The headset or speakerphone also gives you the ability to stand up during the phone call.

**ALSO REMEMBER*** Try not to sit for more than 50 minutes at a time, get up and stretch it out.
* Alternate crossing your legs.
* Every 20 minutes look away from your computer screen and focus on something 20 feet away for 20 seconds, this will help reduce eye strain and discomfort.
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