

Office Ergonomics

Proper office ergonomics - including the correct height of a chair, proper spacing between equipment and the worker, and good posture - can help you prevent a musculoskeletal injury (MSI).

Let's remember that an "office" applies to any place where we may conduct office or other administrative work duties. While working from home may still be considered a temporary move, the reality is that we've been working from home long enough that "temporary" workstations need to be set up in a way that will minimize the risk of developing an MSI. For example:

- Try to keep key items, such as your telephone, stapler, or printed materials at arm's-length to minimize over-reaching,
- Use a document holder to avoid neck strain,
- Stand up to reach anything that can't be easily reached while sitting.
- Here are some more tips to help make your work station - at home or at the office - fit your body.

Monitor

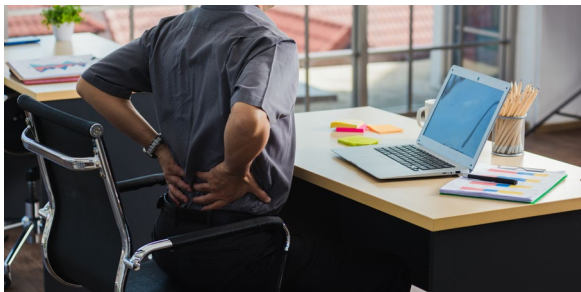
- Place the monitor directly in front of you, about an arm's length away. The top of the screen should be at or slightly below eye level. If you wear bifocals, lower the monitor an additional 1 to 2 inches for more comfortable viewing.
- The monitor should be directly behind your keyboard.
- Place your monitor so that the brightest light source (window, light fixture) is to the side.

Chair

- Select a chair that supports your back (spinal curves).
- Adjust the height of your chair so that your feet rest flat on the floor or on a footrest and your thighs are parallel to the floor.
- Adjust armrests so your arms rest gently with your shoulders relaxed.

Keyboard and mouse

- Place your mouse within easy reach and on the same level as your keyboard.
- When typing or using your mouse, keep your wrists straight, your upper arms close to your body, and your hands at or slightly below the level of your elbows.



- Keyboard shortcuts can be used to reduce extended mouse use.
- If possible, adjust the sensitivity of the mouse so you can use a light touch to operate it.
- Alternate the hand you use to operate the mouse by moving the mouse to the other side of your keyboard.

Telephone

- If you frequently talk on the phone and type or write at the same time, place your phone on speaker or use a headset rather than cradling the phone between your head and neck.

Footrest

- If your chair is too high for you to rest your feet flat on the floor or the height of your desk requires your chair to sit higher, use a footrest. If a footrest is not available, try using a small stool or a stack of sturdy books instead.

Desk

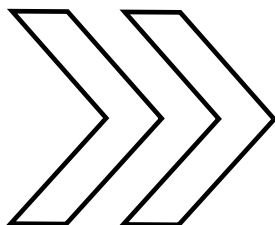
- Under the desk, make sure there's clearance for your knees, thighs, and feet.
- If the desk is too low and can't be adjusted, place sturdy boards or blocks under the desk legs to raise it.
- If the desk is too high and can't be adjusted, raise your chair.
- Use a footrest to support your feet as needed.
- If your desk has a hard edge, pad the edge, or use a wrist rest.
- Don't store items under your desk.

Do you need more information? RPM can help!

RPM safety advisors will soon be able to offer ergonomic assessments as part of their advisory services. In the meantime, here are a few more resources you may want to review:

- [Office Ergonomics Risk Factor Checklist](#) - SAFE Work Manitoba
- [Office Ergonomics Resources](#) - CCOHS
- SAFE Work Manitoba Bulletins:
 - [Hazards of the Seated Posture](#)
 - [Neck and Shoulder Hazards](#)
 - [Arm, Hand, and Wrist Hazards](#)
 - [Adjusting the office workstation](#)

Please note RPM services are offered to RPM registered companies only. Your company must be registered with RPM and be in the process of working towards certification or must have achieved the SAFE Work Manitoba Trucking Certificate of Recognition. Not yet registered in the RPM program? Today is a great day to get started! Our contact information is below:



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