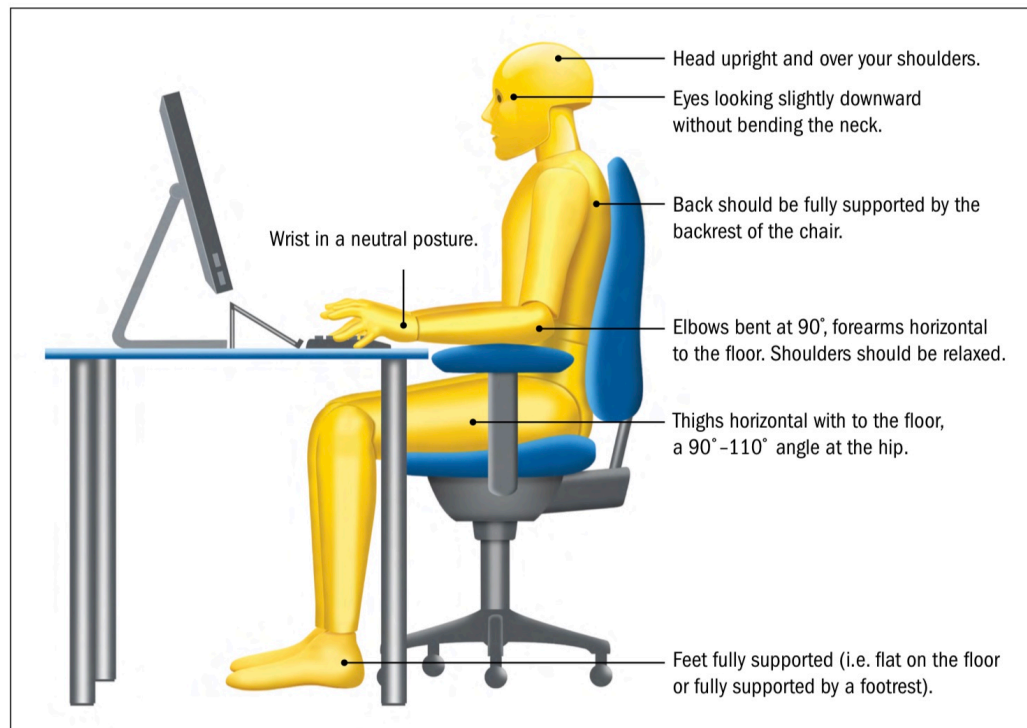


HOME OFFICE ERGONOMIC REFERENCE GUIDE

During this time of change and social distancing practises, Dempster Wellness would like to ensure you remain healthy and safe while working from home. No matter how well a workstation is designed, problems may arise if attention is not paid to the way the work is done. Working at a computer, when at your office workstation or at home, often involves very few changes in body posture/position. This lack of movement can lead to muscle fatigue and/or pain. Attempting to position yourself as close as possible to the visual below will ensure neutral joint postures and decreased work loads onto your body. And no you don't have to stay so upright like the individual below is doing! It's humanly impossible for extended periods and very uncomfortable! - the visual is only for overall joint positioning when seated.

NEUTRAL POSTURE FOR COMPUTER TASKS



Shoulders down, relaxed and arms at sides
Elbows at 90 degrees
Back resting into backrest
Lumbar curve of spine supported
Ears over shoulders
Wrists in neutral position
Buttocks at the back of the seat- no perching!
90 degree angle at knees
Evenly positioned onto both sit bones
Feet resting firmly on floor/or other supportive items

2 minute stretch break every hour!! To decrease the negative effects of extended periods of sitting. Get up out of the chair and walk around/engage in another task.

MONITOR

Height: Top of monitor casing (whether a standard monitor or a laptop monitor) should be level with eyes when you are seated at a comfortable seat height. Corrective lens users (reading, bifocal, progressive) position somewhat lower, if possible, or raise seat height up slightly and use foot support, to set screen(s) into the near sighted portion of corrective lens.

Position: directly in front of you. Dual screen set up should have screen slightly angled inwards towards you and where the two screens meet should be inline with your belly button.

Distance: Approximately an arms length away.

Glare: Position monitor(s) perpendicular to primary light source (windows). Use blinds or pull down shades when necessary.

Lighting: Ensure your work area has adequate lighting for visual comfort.

BLINK! - The number of blinks substantially decreases, while viewing screens (monitors, tablets, cellphones) for extended periods of time, from 21 blinks per minutes (occurs during regular activities like conversation) to 7 blinks per minute. This can lead to dry eye symptoms and eye fatigue. To decrease work loads on the small eye muscles look off into distance every hour to decrease work load on the near sighted visual system used when reading the screen(s) all day.

CHAIR

Not all home chairs have the same adjustability that your office chair may have but there are a few tips/adjustments you can make to increase the comfort and support.

Height: Adjust height of chair until elbows are at 90 degrees/elbow is at the same height as the work surface/table/keyboard tray you are working from and wrists are in neutral (appear flat) when typing/using mouse. This may mean raising the height of your chair up and placing your feet onto a hard, flat item that simulates foot support (reams of photocopy paper, small box, etc). If your chair does not adjust in height, placing several pillows on the seat pan may raise you high enough, while maintaining comfort, to ensure your upper extremities are level with the work surface you are typing/using a mouse from.

Backrest: Should have good lower back (lumbar) support - if not available use a lumbar roll, small pillow or rolled up small towel, placed into the lower back curve of your spine.

Armrests: If your chair has adjustable armrests, where the arm cap swivels/pivots inwards, attempt to use them as much as possible while typing/using the mouse. Use of armrests assist in supporting the weight of each arm during frequent, extended periods of typing and mouse tasks and decreases the workloads on muscles of the neck, shoulder and shoulder blades when set at appropriate height - shoulders relaxed, bend elbows at 90 degrees, armrest pads should be adjusted to where elbow bends naturally and the weight of the arms rested on each pad. If the chair has no armrests, increase amount of mini stretch breaks taken throughout the work day to decrease work loads on your upper extremities, neck, upper/middle back areas.

KEYBOARD

Location: Should be set at a height where your elbows are positioned at 90 degrees when shoulders are relaxed (not hiked upwards or drooping/slouching downwards). If too low adjust place keyboard and mouse onto books, thin boxes, etc that position keyboard/mouse at your seated elbow height. If keyboard is set on top of workstation/table that is too high, a temporary measure is to raise chair height up/or use pillows under your buttocks until elbows are level with workstation/table and use foot support (footrest or reams of paper) to maintain 90 degrees in your lower extremities. Keyboard should be located directly in front of you.

Adjustable Feet Under Keyboard: Should not be engaged/used to ensure neutral wrist position for touch typists (do not look at keys). Do not tilt towards you as this position bends the wrist during typing increasing the workloads the hands, wrists and forearms.

The feet under a keyboard product may be engaged (tilted upwards) for finger typists (looks at the keys when typing) to decrease amount of neck bending needed to look down at the keys.

Avoid resting the wrists/forearms on the hard edge of the desk/table or the desk/table surface for extended periods of time. This can exert contact stress to the forearms/wrists. Contact stress compresses muscles and tendons and may impact circulation.

Temporary Measure: Place a loose, soft, rolled up hand towel in front of the keyboard to decrease the amount of contact stress to the wrists/forearms. Ensure wrists are in neutral. Ensure hands and fingers are relaxed when typing.

MOUSE

Location: Should be level with the keyboard and adjacent/close to keyboard to decrease the amount of extended reaching with the arm and outward rotation of the shoulder.

Hold mouse loosely, do not grip tightly
Ensure wrist is in neutral position
Click with a light touch

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Do not position to side of keyboard, mouse or monitor

Position either on an adjustable document holder or an empty 2-3" h empty binder, directly in front of you between the monitor(s) and the keyboard (this should not force you to adjust your monitor higher) - place all documents you need to read/review here.
Move monitor back slightly if needed.

LAPTOP

Laptops are generally great for portability but are a nightmare ergonomically to position the user into neutral postures. The issue stems from the fact that when the typing area of the laptop is set to the user's comfortable working height (90 degree elbow), the laptop screen is positioned too low which promotes neck bending. If the monitor is then positioned to the user's viewing height (casing level with eyes when seated), the keyboard of the laptop is then too high which positions the forearms, wrists and hands out of neutral.

To set up your laptop ergonomically, set the laptop onto some books, etc., to set the casing of the laptop monitor screen level with the eyes and install an external keyboard and mouse to position the forearms, wrist and hands into neutral.

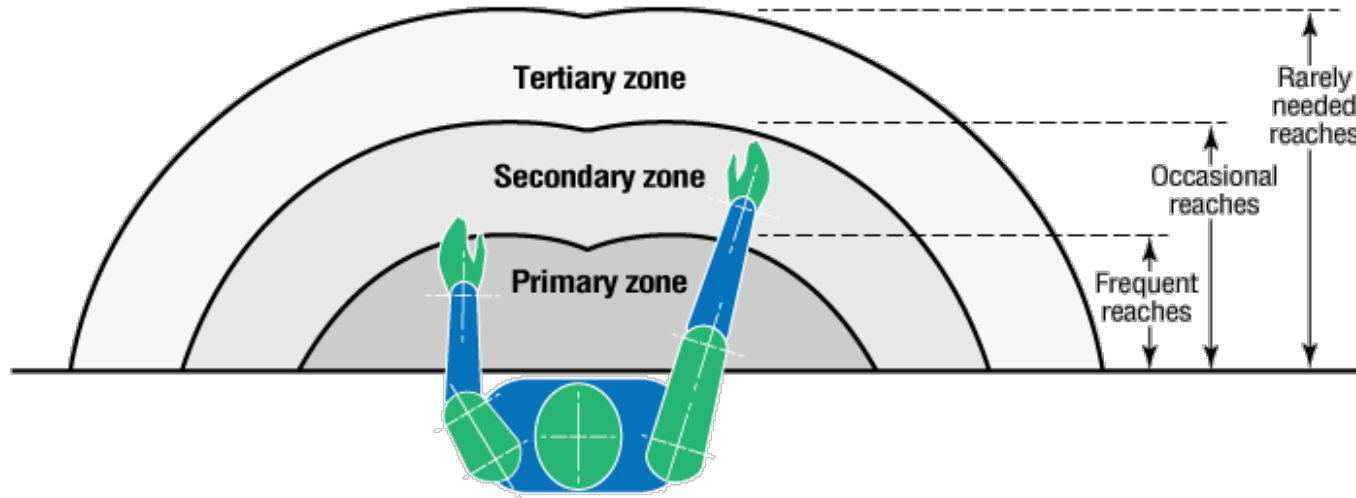
TELEPHONE/CELLPHONE

Ensure they are positioned close to you, to decrease extended reaching and forward/sideways leaning in the chair, if using frequently for your job.

Use speaker feature as much as possible to avoid "cradling" of the telephone/cellphone between your neck and shoulder if multi-tasking while on the phone. This posture increases workloads in the neck, shoulder, upper/middle back areas.

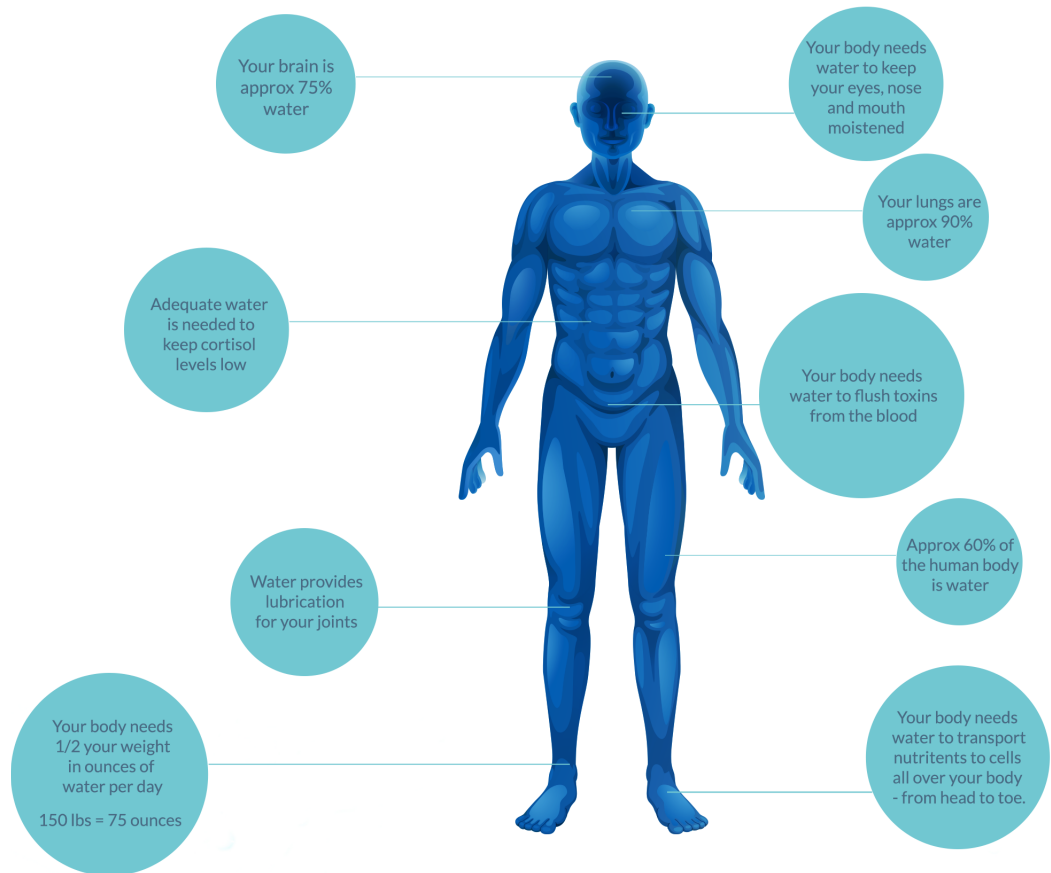
Avoid Text Neck! by positioning the cellphone more in front of you when texting, to maintain neutral neck postures.

All frequently used items needed to complete work tasks (keyboard, mouse, phone, label makers, pens, stamps, etc) should be placed in the primary zone to decrease amount of forward leaning in the chair and extended reaching. Items used occasionally can be placed in the secondary zone and accessed only when needed.



DILUTE YOUR STRESS WITH H2O

Ensure you are drinking enough water throughout the workday!



EASY STRETCHES TO COMPLETE AT HOME OFFICE

Please consult your treating therapist/physician if you have an existing injury/medical condition prior to introducing these stretches into your work routine at home.

EXERCISES FOR THE OFFICE

1. a) Start with your hand open.



b) Make a fist. Keep your thumb straight, not tucked. Hold 10 seconds and relax.

- Repeat 3 times.



c) Slide your finger tips up your palm so the tips of your fingers are near the base of your fingers and you should feel a stretch. Do not force your fingers with your other hand if something is painful.

- Repeat 3 times.



2. With your hand open and facing down, gently bend wrist from side to side, as far as possible. Hold for 10 seconds.

- Repeat 3 times.



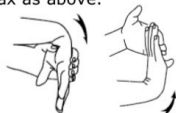
3. Start by stretching your arm and hand out and slowly rotate the wrist down until you feel a stretch. Hold for 10 seconds. Next, rotate the palm up until you feel a stretch. Hold for 10 seconds.

- Repeat 3 times.



4. With elbow straight and hand in front of you. Grasp your hand and hold your fingers with the other hand. Slowly bend your wrist down until you feel a stretch.

- Hold for 10 seconds. Relax. Repeat 3 times.
- Then slowly bend your wrist up until you feel the stretch. Hold and relax as above.



5. Sitting with your elbows on the table and palms together, slowly lower wrists to the table until you feel a stretch (your elbows will move outward a bit). Be sure to keep your palms together throughout the stretch. Hold 10 seconds. Relax.

- Repeat 3 times.



6. Shoulder Shrug: The purpose of the shoulder shrug is to relieve early symptoms of tightness or tension in the shoulder and neck area.

- Raise the top of your shoulders towards your ears until you feel slight tension in your neck and shoulders. Hold for 10 seconds. Then relax your shoulders downward into their normal position.
- Do this 3 times.



7. Head Glide: The head glide helps to stretch your chest, neck and shoulder muscles.

- Sit or stand upright. Without lifting your chin, glide your head straight back. You know you are doing this exercise right if it gives you the feeling of a double chin.
- Hold for 10 seconds and repeat 3 times.



8. Neck Relaxer: This exercise helps to relax the neck.

- Drop your head slowly to the left, trying to touch your left ear to your left shoulder. Hold for 10 sec. Repeat on the right side and hold 10 seconds.
- Repeat 3 times on each side.



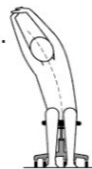
9. Shoulder Roll: This exercise will help relax the shoulder muscles.

- Slowly roll your shoulders backward 10 times in a circular motion. Next, roll your shoulders forwards 10 times.



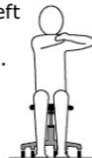
10. Back / Side Stretch:

- Interlace your fingers and lift your arms over your head, keeping the elbows straight. Press arms as far back as you can. To stretch your sides, slowly lean to the left, hold for 10 seconds. Then lean to the right and hold 10 seconds.
- Repeat 3 times on each side.



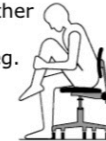
11. Middle / Upper Back Stretch:

- Hold your right arm with your left hand just above the elbow. Gently push your elbow toward your left shoulder. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat with your left arm.
- Repeat 3 times on each side.



12. Back Curl (will also stretch your legs):

- Grasp your shin. Lift the leg off the floor. Bend forward (curling your back), and reach your nose to your knee. Hold 10 seconds. Repeat with the other leg.
- Repeat 3 times with each leg.



13. Ankle Flex and Stretch:

- Hold one foot off the floor with your leg straight. Alternately flex your ankle (point your toes up) and extend (point your toes down). Repeat with the other leg.
- Repeat 3 times with each leg.



14. Leg Lift:

- Sit forward on the chair so that your back is not touching the chair's back. Place feet flat on the floor. With a straight leg, lift one foot a few inches off the floor. Hold momentarily, and return your foot to the floor. Repeat with the other leg.
- Repeat 3 times with each leg





Please feel free to contact us, during your time at home, if you have any questions regarding your home office/
work from home set up.

Depending on this situation and its duration we are able to conduct our Office Ergonomic Assessment Services
remotely/online if any employee requires Ergonomic measures beyond this simple Home Office Guide. We are
here to help.

From the team at Dempster Wellness, Be Well!

HEALTHY EMPLOYEES | ENGAGED WORKFORCE

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Visual References Supplied by: Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS); Canadian Standards Associations CSA Z412-17;
Work Safe for Life NS Office Ergonomic Resource Guide.

