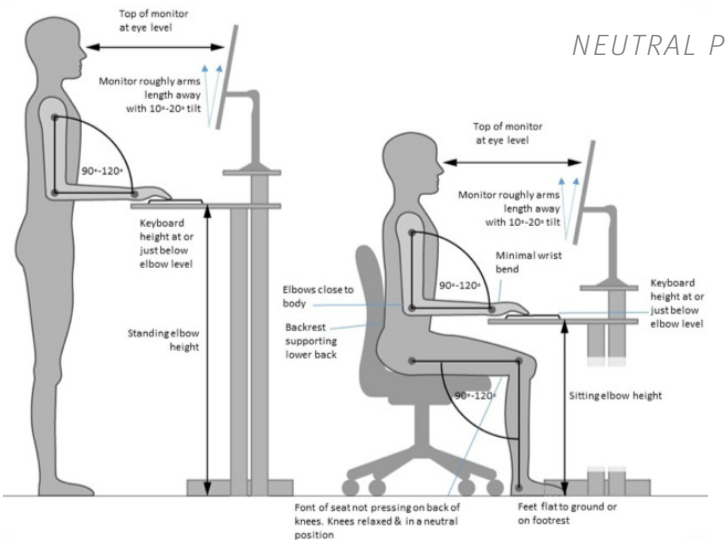
VOLUME 3 | ISSUE 8

Ergonomic Tips

Written by Alex Miller, ARM, OHST



If you're sitting at a desk, adjust your seat, computer monitors, and any other tools you use so they meet the following conditions:

- Keep the keyboard flat on your desk surface with the tabs "down."
- Avoid overstretching your wrist/hand to access your mouse.
- Keep your arms/wrists "flat" (not elevated upward) in relation to the keyboard.
- Monitor should be about an arm's reach away (est. 16 – 18 inches). Head should align with the top of the monitor. The monitor should be tilted backwards slightly.
- When turning to retrieve your phone, paper documents, etc., try to move your entire body instead of just turning your neck or hands to help maintain "neutrality."
- If you need additional mobility with your chair, use a chair mat (assuming your chair has casters).
- If you will be doing significant data entry, use a document holder adjacent to your monitor.

In addition to using neutral posture, break up tasks and stretch regularly.

Neutral body posture is a natural and comfortable position where joints, muscles, connective tissues such as tendons, and the skeletal system are aligned.

Joints work like hinges with muscles contracting to pull extremities towards the body.

This theory works for all joints—including the very small ones in your hands and wrists—and they can be overworked. If soreness becomes an issue, getting your body position back to "neutral" will give your muscles the best chance to recover. In addition, blood flow is also extremely important to muscle recovery.

Therefore, taking breaks and moving is critical to get blood flow through the parts of the body that need repair.

Following these best practices, you should be able to work comfortably from home. Be creative to solve your issues. For example, if you need to raise your monitor a little, a ream of paper or a book will do the trick.

When setting up your desk, remember to check these items:

- Make sure you have enough room for everything. Prioritize closeness based on need.
- Your most accessed items such as your mouse should be in the “green zone”. Others in “yellow” and “red” based on use.
- Remove any under-desk obstructions to allow enough room to get into your neutral position.
- A document holder to hold paper for prolonged computer inputting is very useful.
- Avoid contact with any sharp or square edges on your work surfaces. This could prevent blood flow and cause tingling in your extremities.
- If a large percentage of your time involves using a phone, consider using a phone headset.

Your chair is an important part of your office setup. Make sure:

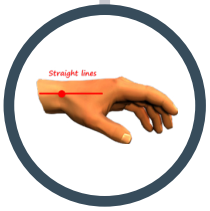
- Your chair will allow you to get into the neutral position.
- If your feet do not rest flat on the floor when your chair is properly adjusted, use a footrest.
- If your chair’s arms interfere with your body or desk, remove them if you can.
- The chair has a stable base supported by five legs with casters (fewer legs are unstable).
- Adjust your seat back so it supports the lumbar curve of your spine.

Best Practices for monitor positioning would be:

- **Monitor Height:** Your eye level falls within 2” – 3” of the top of the screen
- **Monitor Distance:** Should be 18” to 30” from your eyes (adjust for comfort and corrective lenses).
- **Positioning:** Primary monitor should be directly in front of you
- **Lighting:** Natural light should be from the side, and artificial from above or side. Avoid reflections.

Your Keyboard and Mouse

- Adjust your keyboard height so your elbow is at about 90° and your forearms and hands are straight.
- Your keyboard should allow you to relax your arms, let them hang close to your body, and your fingers land on home row.
- Keep your wrists in straight lines, as to not bend up, down, or laterally.
- When using your mouse, use your arm and shoulders to move the mouse as opposed to your fingers. Your larger muscles will last longer than your small muscles in your hand and wrist.



Work Habits

- Take short and frequent breaks every 20-30 minutes. Stretch and move around to get blood flowing to your extremities.
- If you frequently change body positions while working, remember to get back to neutral position.
- Give your eyes with vision breaks. Use the 20-20-20 rule. For every 20 minutes you spend looking at a screen, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds.

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