

# 9. Making Changes to Reduce Discomfort & Workstation Settings

Revised: October 21, 2013

- The **checklist** referred to in this section is the Computer User MSD Prevention Checklist available at the link below

# Computer Workstation Overview

A [printable version](#) of this slide is online.

Body parts & what makes them happy	Workstation Tips
<b>Low back:</b> Natural curve	Set seat height so knees are at hip level or slightly lower, feet flat on the floor or footrest. Seat/backrest angle so torso/upper leg angle is 90-115 degrees. Backrest height provides support for curve
<b>Shoulder, elbow, wrist, fingers:</b> Upper arms vertical. Elbows close to side. Forearms parallel to ground or sloping slightly down. Wrists straight. Fingers curled.	Set keyboard platform height & angle to match forearm angle and allow hands to float. Mouse on same level and close to keyboard (ideally on the left). Armrests supportive yet allow elbows to swing freely.
<b>Neck:</b> Looking straight ahead, not up or down or twisted.	Top of screen below eye level, directly in front of you. Paper documents close to screen and upright. Use your hand to hold the phone not your head and shoulder. Learn to touch type.
<b>Eyes:</b> Looking at objects far away. Blinking.	Tilt screen for easiest reading. Test screen closer or farther away. Use bigger fonts.
<b>Whole body:</b> Movement	Don't sit too long. Stretch. Be active.



# Checklist Sections (Workshop Slides) to Review

Discomfort Area	Checklist Sections to Review (see bottom of slide for the link)
Low back	Work Organization Chair Workstation Layout (includes Views/Reaches Required for Visitors)
Shoulder, elbow, wrist, fingers	Work Organization Keyboard/Calculator/Mouse (K/C/M) Positioning K/C/M Use (includes Chair armrests) Workstation layout (includes Reaches Required for Visitors) See tips for Neck (below)
Neck	See next slide
Eyes	Work Organization Monitor Paper Documents
Whole body	Work Organization

# Neck strain may be the source of any upper extremity discomfort

In the checklist, pay special attention to sections on:

- Work Organization
- Looking at the keyboard (see K/C/M Positioning and Use)
- Monitor
- Paper documents
- Telephone
- Workstation layout (includes Views Required for Visitors)

# Workshop Activity: Making Changes

- What changes would you like to make?
- Review area photos (if any)

# Making Changes to Reduce Discomfort

- On the checklist, “Yes/True” answers are ideal, however “No/False” answers are not necessarily unhealthy. Impact on health depends on the uninterrupted duration of the activity in question.
- To avoid creating new problems, think carefully about making changes, especially if you are not experiencing discomfort. The checklist contains general rules and there are exceptions to every rule.
- Don’t make too many changes at once. It can be difficult to tell what is helping and what is not.
- If a change feels uncomfortable initially, don’t give up right away. It may just take a while to get used to and in the long run it may be better for you.

# After making changes, make note of your Workstation Settings

- After you have adjusted it to the best of your ability, make note of the settings of your workstation on the checklist
- Pay particular attention to any adjustments that are not “B” (see next slide)
- Although there are advantages to work station adjustability, lack of adjustability does not necessarily mean that a workstation does not fit you. Components may already be in the right position for you.

# Adjust your workstation and indicate the final settings on your checklist using the legend below

N = Not Adjustable; H = Highest Setting; L = Lowest Setting; B = Between Highest & Lowest (An H or L response indicates the range of adjustment may not be sufficient.)

## Chair (adjust this 1<sup>st</sup>, with footrest if necessary)

- a) Seat height, with your highest and lowest heeled shoes
- b) Seat tilt/angle
- c) Seat depth (distance from backrest to front of seat)
- d) Backrest height
- e) Backrest angle
- f) Size of lumbar support
- g) Armrest height
- h) Armrest angle
- i) Footrest (or Stool foot ring)

## Keyboard/Mouse (2<sup>nd</sup> adjustment)

- j) Keyboard platform height
- k) Keyboard platform angle
- l) Keyboard tilt

## Monitor (3<sup>rd</sup> adjustment)

- m) Monitor height
- n) Monitor tilt



# This doesn't have to happen



## Preventive measures

- **Physical fitness**
- **Proper workstation setup**
- **Proper body mechanics**
- **Learn software shortcuts**
- **Early intervention**

Most importantly...  
vary activities



# If changes don't help...

- If your changes don't help or you want further advice, talk with
  - your doctor
  - your supervisor/HSO
  - your union/JHSC
  - DOHS
- [Musculoskeletal Discomfort Response Procedure](#)

# End of Checklist

- Additional workshop slides follow
- To go back to the main menu
  - Click on the link below or press <Tab> then <Enter>

# Back Safety Supplement – reducing back injury risk at home, work and play



# Cups, cans, bottles

**Please use bins in  
main corridor**

