**BASIC COMPUTER WORKSTATION GUIDELINES**

Sit Only or Sit-To-Stand Workstations

The basic guidelines are the same for either workstations. However, when standing for long periods of time it is recommended to use good support shoes or an anti-fatigue mat. Also, use the ratio (2 hour stand / 5.5 hours sitting) per work day. You can mix up the time to see what works best for you.

**TASK CHAIR**
- The task chair must be fully adjustable from a seated position. The lumbar or lower back should be properly supported—the support should fit the curve of the lower back. The chair should also have adjustable armrest support.
- Footrest are recommended and may be necessary for some employees.
- Employees should always be instructed on the chair’s operating controls. Instructions may be provided by the vendor or manufacturer.

**MONITOR (Single/Dual)**
- The monitor should be raised so that the top of the viewing screen is at or below eye level, and approximately 20 to 40 inches from worker’s face, with a 15 to 20 degree tilt back, unless the angle causes additional glare.
- When setting up a dual monitor workstation, the primary task monitor should be centered, with the second monitor positioned to the right or left at the same eye level as the primary task monitor. It is recommended that the user use eye movement to view the screens, instead of moving the head and neck back and forth or up and down.
- A document holder should be placed at the same distance and height as the monitor.

**KEYBOARD AND MOUSE**
- The keyboard should be placed in front of and aligned with the monitor.
- During use, the upper arm should be in a relaxed vertical position from which the lower arm extends toward the keyboard creating almost a right angle, or “L” shape.
- The keyboard should be approximately at elbow height, and never higher than 2 ½ inches above the work surface.
- An ergonomic mouse should be placed to the right or the left of the keyboard and at the same height.

**LIGHTING/GLARE:**
- If computer work is the employee’s primary task, consider lowering the general room lighting level and use a properly placed task lamp.
- Position the work area so that light sources are directly above rather than behind or facing the monitor. If necessary, use shades or blinds to reduce intensity of direct sunlight.
- An anti-glare filter over the viewing screen should aid in reducing serious glare problems caused by direct or indirect light sources. Keep static dust from accumulating between screen and filter. Note that matte finished LCD and flat screen CRT monitors are less prone to reflected glare.

**TELEPHONE:**
- As a rule, to minimize neck strain, employees whose jobs require heavy phone usage during computer tasking should be supplied with and encouraged to use a headset. (Note: For freedom of movement wireless is preferred)
- To ensure a comfortable headset fit, the headset should be selected by the user. Always read the instructions on the proper use, maintenance, adjustment and hygiene care of the headset and earpieces. Do not share earpieces.
- Employees whose jobs requires moderate to light phone use should consider a phone shoulder rests.
- An alternative solution would be to use the speaker function of your phone when possible. Caution: When using a speaker phone - always remember to protect the confidentiality of the conversation and do not disturb co-workers within hearing distance.

**HAND HELD DEVICES - TABLETS, SMART PHONES, etc.**
These small computers are fashionably convenient. However, due to the gravitational demands these devices make on the neck, they should be used on a temporary basis only! They should not take the place of a primary computer at an ergonomic set up workstation.

Recommendations for mini-computers, tablets, pads, and smart phones are as follows:
- Raise the screen up to reduce neck strain, use a stand or case to prop it up.
- The larger the screen the less eye straining.
- Use an external keyboard/mouse for prolonged typing, when necessary.
- Not for prolong use!

For more information on ergonomics or other Occupational Health & Safety related issues call us at (504) 988-5486 or visit our website at tulane.edu/OEHS

Note: Pictures from Bing’s free Online Images, OSHA eTools & OEHS

Revised-8/19/15
Most common pain areas:

**SHOULDER**
38%

**NECK**
53%

**LOW BACK**
63%

**WRIST**
33%

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