

What Is Ergonomics?

- The study of ergonomics has grown along with a rise in workplace musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). MSDs refer to conditions that involve the nerves, tendons, muscles and supporting structures of the body. The neck, shoulders, elbows, hands, wrists and back are the areas most often affected.

Good ergonomics fits the task to the person rather than forcing the person to adapt to the task. An ergonomically friendly workstation can reduce the strain, pain and possible injuries that could occur as a result of overreaching, awkward working positions and repetitive motions.

Prevent Pain and Strain: Strengthen Your Back

Your back muscles are unique in that they are nearly always active. Holding you upright, assisting when you lift, supporting your posture, even supporting you while you sleep ... your back is always working.

- Maintaining a **good posture** ensures that your vertebrae are properly aligned. Your ears, shoulders and hips should be in a straight line. Without support from strong, flexible muscles, your back will begin to lose its natural alignment, which can lead to pain and strain.
- Maintain a **healthy weight**. Excess abdominal weight pulls on your lower back, eventually causing strain.
- **Exercise** strengthens your back, as well as other muscles that support your back. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderately intense exercise most days of the week. Try aerobics, walking and abdominal crunches.



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• Easy Ergonomics •

1. Make sure your workstation fits you
2. Vary tasks to break from repetition
3. Use correct form and posture

Ergonomics, Head to Toe

Practicing good ergonomic principles may prevent painful conditions such as carpal tunnel syndrome, neck tension, tendonitis and low-back pain. **Ergonomics quick tips:**

- Your **monitor** should be level with your line of vision and at approximately arm's length. Craning your neck up or down, or looking to the side, can cause neck and shoulder pain.
- If you use your **telephone** for extended periods, wear a hands-free headset if possible.
- Adjust your **chair and armrest** heights, so that your elbows and knees form right angles.
- Support your lower back. Consider using a lumbar pad or small pillow if your chair does not have **lumbar support**. While sitting, leave approximately 2-3 inches between the back of your knees and the edge of your seat.
- Set your **keyboard** so that your elbows fall comfortably at your sides at right angles ... forearms parallel to the floor ... wrists straight.
- Position your **mouse** close to and at the same level as your keyboard.
- Keep your **desk accessories** within easy reach.
- Sit with both **feet** flat on the floor.

OFFICE HOT SPOTS

- Computer workstation
- Keyboard and monitor
- Chair
- Desk and desk accessories

