



# Working From Home

SAFETY & ERGONOMIC BEST PRACTICES





# Injury Prevention Tips

## WORKSTATION FATIGUE

### Health Consequences:

#### Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Pain in the hand and arm accompanied by tingling

#### Muscle Aches and Pains

Persistent pain that lasts for months or years may be caused by physical or psychological factors

#### Monitor Position

Sitting too far or too close to your monitor can overwork your eyes and create long term vision problems. Glare can also be an issue. Make sure that light sources are perpendicular to your monitor and you are an appropriate distance away.

#### Wrist Position

Adjust your chair and armrests so that your wrists are straight, not bent. Also, avoid contact trauma with the edge of the desk.

#### Ample Leg Room

Your legs should not come into contact with the desk. You should have space above and to the sides of them.

#### Placement of Items

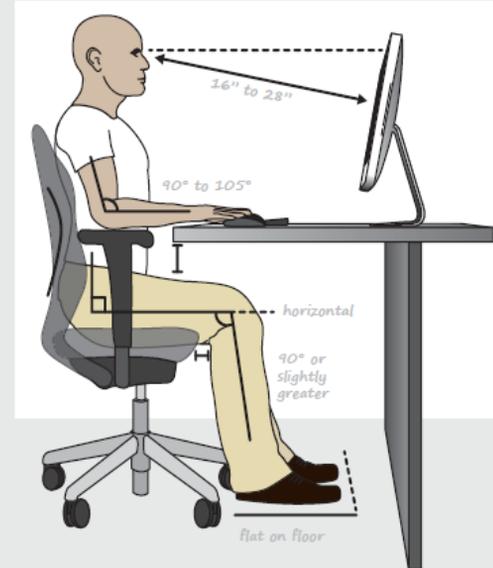
Frequently used items should be positioned as near as possible to reduce awkward reaching postures.

#### Posture

Proper lumbar support and sitting up straight can prevent long term chronic lower back pain.

#### Chair Fit

Using a chair that is too high, too low, too big, or too small can stifle blood flow and cause leg pain or nerve damage.





# Neutral Body Position

Shoulders are relaxed.

Joints are naturally aligned.

Spine is naturally curved.

Muscles are at ease, not contracted or stretched.

Torso, neck, and head are in line and vertical.

Fingers are slightly curved and not spread apart.

Upper arms hang straight down.

Elbows are close to the body.

Wrists are straight.

Torso is not twisted.



# Chair Fit and Adjustment

### Seats:

- Cushioned, with a rounded “waterfall” front
- Not too long, i.e., not pressing on the back of knees
- Set at the correct height, so that feet are flat on floor or footrest
- Tilted so that hips are at the same level as knees

### Armrests:

- Set at a height so that shoulders are relaxed, and forearms are at a right angle to upper arms
- Tilted so that wrists are at same level or slightly lower than elbows
- Set at a width that keeps elbows close to the body
- Set so that they do not interfere with movement

### Backrests:

- Set at a height so that the outward curve fits into the small of the back
- Nearly upright or, if the head is supported, slightly reclined





# Shoulder and Neck Risk Factors

**Reduce your risk of shoulder and neck strain by limiting these actions:**

- Awkward postures, such as tilting the head for extended periods of time
- Arms extended in front or to the side when working
- Excess force
- Frequent or heavy lifting
- Static postures
- Repetitive motion
- Working or lifting above shoulder-height



# Workstation Environment

Be sure the work area is adequately lit and loud noises are kept to a minimum.

Ideally, the workstation should be separated from common areas of the house. This helps with noise, distractions and can help mentally separate work from home life, ultimately creating balance between the two.



SAFETY

# Fire and Electrical Concerns

When employees work from home, there is often little direction provided to support their safety.

Perhaps the greatest danger in the home is fire.

Fortunately, there are several simple precautions that you can take to considerably reduce your fire risk.





# Fire and Electrical Outlets

- Don't overload electrical circuits and extension cords. If you have several pieces of office equipment running simultaneously, make sure that their combined voltage doesn't exceed the capacity of their circuits. Extension cords are particularly prone to overload since they rarely feature the safety features of breakers or fuses.
- Check all electrical cords and plugs for damage and wear.
- Check to ensure electrical cords do not run under rugs and are never nailed or stapled in place.
- Make sure extension cords are being used ONLY as a temporary measure.
- Ensure that extension cords and circuits are not overloaded.



# Fire Safety Measures

- Have a fire and evacuation plan. Have a fire escape route planned—a good idea for any home. Make sure that your office set-up doesn't hinder escape. For instance, don't place a large, difficult-to-move cabinet in front of the windows.
- Assure the plan is practiced regularly.
- Designate a meeting place where others can find you in case of fire.
- Assure there are unblocked exits for all areas.
- Know how to "stop, drop and roll" if your clothes catch fire.
- Remember that you should crawl low under smoke to safety in the event of fire and dense smoke.
- Regularly inspect the work area for fire hazards.
- Assure that your home has at least one smoke alarm on every level and test them regularly.
- Have a fire extinguisher handy. Choose one that is suitable for multiple types of fire, particularly paper and electrical fires.



# Fire Safety Tips

- Make sure all electrical appliances are turned off when you leave the house.
- Complete regular backups of your data and store those backups offsite to reduce the consequence of electrical or computer failures, or fires destroying office equipment.
- Have a fire proof filing cabinet or safe for documents and software disks.
- If you use a space heater for warmth, choose one approved by Underwriters Laboratory (UL) for electrical safety. Keep it away from paper or other flammable materials, and turn it off when not in use. In general, space heaters are not recommended since they are responsible for many fires every year.
- Don't get distracted by doing multiple tasks that involve fire risks, especially cooking in the kitchen while working.
- Don't smoke. A stray cigarette or match can ignite paper, chemicals, or electrical equipment.



## FOR MORE SAFETY & ERGONOMIC BEST PRACTICES

**Talk to your Hylant Representative about the safety resources available to help you support your workforce at home or in the workplace.**

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