ERGONOMICS FOR ADULTS: AND FOR KIDS:

MONITOR AT EYE LEVEL
KEYBOARD AT ELBOW HEIGHT
LUMBAR SUPPORT CHAIR

With the switch to working-from-home that many are currently experiencing, one consequence may be increased aches and pains due to the lack of ergonomic equipment to maintain appropriate posture throughout the day. Many employees are using their laptops as their primary device, but laptops were designed with maximum portability (not ergonomics) in mind. This can result in poor head/neck and hand/wrist posture and lead to increased pain. In addition, most people don't have an adjustable chair, which can exacerbate back and leg pain. The good news is that there are small adjustments you can make to improve your ergonomics at home. Below are some suggestions from the UF/GatorCare Wellness team.

*No matter whether you work remotely or at the office, **there are three important ergonomic rules everyone should follow**: First, maintain a neutral posture; Second, use a chair that supports your back; Third, position your computer monitor at eye level. Here are some additional tips:*

1. ***Improve your posture-*** *Even if you feel comfortable on your sofa, that does not mean the body is well-supported. In your remote location, dedicate a workspace to help organize and create discipline in your day.*
2. ***Maintain a neutral posture-*** *Your neck should align with the spine (not bent or forward), with your back relaxed and supported, shoulders relaxed (not hunched or rounded), elbows close to the body and bent at an angle between 90 and 120 degrees, keep the wrist and hands straight (not bent or turned).*
3. ***Find a desk-*** *There is no problem with using your dining table or similar surface as your desk as long as you can position your computer screen in front of you so you don't strain your neck.*
4. ***Pick a chair-*** *The chair may be the most important part of your remote office, depending on how much time you spend sitting. Sit all the way back in your chair, make sure your back is straight and supported.*
5. ***Position your laptop correctly-*** *If you are going to use your laptop for extended periods, <u>consider using a laptop stand or place your laptop on a stable support surface</u>, such as reams of papers, boxes, or books to achieve proper screen height (browser bar at your eye level). Also, you should <u>consider adding an external keyboard and mouse</u>. This will help prevent poor posture with either the arms or hands held too high or the neck and back bent down.*
6. ***Move around–*** *Even if you have a perfect workstation, you shouldn't sit all day. Instead, mix up your posture; Take mini-breaks (go for a short walk) during the day, add stretch exercises every hour. You can easily switch positions by sitting at the dining table and standing at your kitchen counter. This may help to keep you comfortable during the day.*

If you feel you are experiencing discomfort due to the setup of your workstation, visit http://www.ehs.ufl.edu/programs/ergonomics/office-ergonomics/ for help to adjust your workstation. Or you can contact UF ergonomic specialist: cindy.mercado@ehs.ufl.edu for questions or free consultation.

If you are having difficulty figuring out how to set up your remote workstation to follow these guidelines, this quick and helpful video demonstrates **how to set up a more ergonomic workstation from home using mostly materials you already have around the house**:

https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=ergonomics&docid=608053809789340079&mid=5652ED92C8F5DE4DEC9D5652ED92C8F5DE4DEC9D&view=detail&FORM=VIRE

And finally, if you've been experiencing increased neck/upper back pain since transitioning to work-at-home, you might benefit from trying some of these **simple exercises to fix forward neck posture** (please consult with your healthcare provider before beginning any new exercise regimen): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C-wfV27bzI&feature=emb_rel_end

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As a reminder, many people are adapting to new work-life requirements and trying to juggle multiple responsibilities. It can be helpful to hear the perspectives of others who are going through the same thing and/or to learn new skills to manage some of these challenges. As a result, we continue to offer **free drop-in virtual support groups for UF Health employees** (UF or Shands) that are facilitated by UF mental health professionals. *You may join the group at any time and stay for as long as you like (even a few minutes)*. Groups are offered via PHI Zoom:

- Tuesdays at 5pm-6pm **(Resilience Skills Group)**
- Tuesdays at 6pm-7pm **(Healthcare Worker COVID-19 Support Group)**
- Wednesdays at 6pm-7pm **("Effective Discipline" Parenting Group)**
- Wednesdays at 8pm-9pm **(Resilience Skills Group)**
- Thursdays at 4pm-5pm **(Resilience Skills Group)**
- Thursdays at 6pm-7pm **(Positive Parenting Group)**

You can **learn more about the groups (and access the Zoom links) here:** https://psychiatry.ufl.edu/zoom-drop-in-groups/ (webpage will be updated as more groups are added)

If you are interested in receiving **individualized mental health services**, please call the **UF Health Staff Telepsych Services center between 8:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. (7 days per week) at 352-265-5459 or email c19peersupport@shands.ufl.edu** [provide your name, contact number, and best time(s) to receive a call back]. A licensed mental health professional will perform a quick screening and help you identify the service(s) that would be most useful and convenient for you. There are immediate openings at convenient times, and most services are offered free.

Stay well,

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