



## Five Tips to Prevent Remote Employee Injuries

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## Learning Objectives

In this webinar we will:

- › Review differences in the temporary home office vs. standard office
- › Discuss five strategies to improve remote workplace health
- › Provide examples of office stretches
- › Offer resources for employees & employers in the future

# Home Office vs. Standard Office

- › Workers who don't regularly work from home may not have proper office equipment
- › Having a good home office setup presents specific challenges
  - Space within the home can be limited
  - Space may double as a dining room, kitchen counter, or general use area
  - If space is available, it typically does not have adjustability
- › Remote workers move less often than those in an office setting
- › Remote workers tend to work longer
- › The same safety and productivity risks that apply to office workers still affect remote employees

## Five Strategies to Improve Remote Workplace Health

- › Create a dedicated work space in the home
- › Ensure proper seating
- › Position hardware/equipment for proper neutral posture
- › Keep an eye on time management
- › Follow healthy habits

# Create a Dedicated Work Space

- › Pick a room/area away from distractions and noise
- › Use a table or a desk for a main work surface
- › Make a secondary work area if possible
- › Make sure your workspace has proper lighting to reduce eye strain
- › Ensure your office isn't cluttered and everything you need to work is in reach



# Ensure Proper Seating

Proper seating doesn't have to involve expensive office chairs. Here are some simple ways to improve positioning at home:

- › Choose a comfortable chair with padded cushion and back support
- › Avoid sitting on a couch or recliner
- › When sitting:
  - Sit all the way back in the chair with your back against the backrest
  - Your feet should be flat on the floor or a foot rest
- › To increase lumbar/back support, use a pillow or rolled up towel
- › For a long term solution, a proper adjustable chair should be used

# Positioning of Hardware/Equipment

Positioning of equipment should promote a comfortable neutral posture to reduce the possibility of discomfort

- › When sitting or standing, the work surface should be at or slightly below your elbow height with your arms and shoulders relaxed
  - If you need to raise your seated height, use a pillow or folded towel



# Positioning of Hardware/Equipment

- › Center the monitor/laptop in front of you, in-line with keyboard at approximately arm's length
- › Adjust your monitor/laptop so the top of the display is at or slightly below your eye height
- › Use an external keyboard & mouse directly in front of you near the front edge of the work surface
- › Movement is your friend





# Keeping an Eye on Time Management

- › Set some boundaries to create a distinction between home and work
- › Create a routine that includes a start and stop time, breaks, and getting dressed for work
- › Take a micro break at least every 30 minutes (30 sec. to 2 min.)
  - Set timers on your cell phone, watch, or computer
- › Avoid working longer hours
- › Keep a to-do list to stay on task

For a 7.5 hour day:

- 5 hours sitting
- 2 hours standing
- 0.5 hour of moving
- 16 sit-to-stand transitions



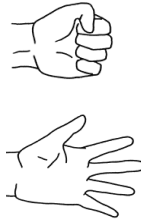
# Follow Healthy Habits

- › Stand up and walk around during breaks, phone calls, and when not using the computer
- › Socialize with colleagues
- › Practice the 20-20-20 rule (every 20 min. look 20 ft. away for 20 sec.)
- › Limit your screen time
- › Maintain a meal schedule to limit snacking
- › Stay hydrated
- › Take stretch breaks for your fingers, hands, arms, legs and torso

# Example Stretches

## Hand stretch

- › Bend the elbows so the forearms are parallel to the floor and palms facing inward
- › Make a tight fist (hold for 3 sec.)
- › Fan out your fingers (hold for 3 sec.)
- › Repeat 10 times



## Overhead stretch

- › Lace the fingers together, turn the palms out, and reach towards the ceiling
- › Hold for 15 sec., repeat 2 times



## Wrist extension and flexion

- › Lift one arm with the elbow straight just below shoulder level with the palm up
- › With the opposite hand, grasp the palm and pull wrist back towards you to feel a stretch in your forearm
- › Turn the same arm over so the palm is facing down, pull the hand so the fingers are pointing down
- › Hold for 15 sec., repeat 2 times for each arm



## Neck stretch

- › Place both hands between your low back and the chair
- › Lower your ear towards your right shoulder while looking forward, hold and return to center
- › Repeat on the other side
- › Hold for 15 sec., repeat 2 times



# Example Stretches

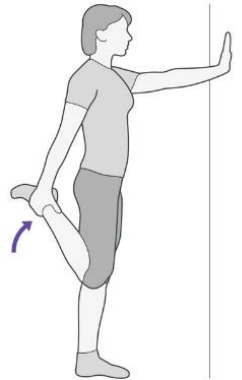
## Standing hamstring stretch

- › Stand up straight with your feet slightly apart and arms relaxed
- › Extend one leg forward placing the heel on the floor with toes pointed up
- › Slightly bend the back leg as if starting to sit
- › Place the hands on the hips or thigh of the leg for support
- › Keeping the back straight, bend forward at the hips until a comfortable stretch is felt in the back of the extended leg
- › Hold for 15 sec., repeat 2 times with both legs



## Standing quad stretch

- › Stand up straight with your feet slightly apart and arms relaxed
- › Place your left hand on a chair back or wall for support if needed
- › With the right hand, grasp your right pant leg or ankle
- › Pull the ankle up keeping your legs close together with the knee pointing towards the ground
- › Hold for 15 sec., repeat 2 times with both legs



# Ergonomics Resources

When remote employees are experiencing discomfort, the following resources are available:

- › Ergonomic tips for your home office
- › Remote telephonic assessments with images or video
- › Standardized equipment list development
- › Ergonomic training

## Ergonomic Tips for Your Home Office



Ergonomics can assist you in improving your posture, health, and productivity through proper workstation design. If you find yourself setting up a home office, there are some ergonomic tips you should keep in mind.

### Chair

- › Choose a comfortable chair with a padded cushion and back support.
- › Your feet should be flat on the floor, thighs parallel to the floor, and your back against the backrest.
- › If you need to raise your chair height, or need more cushion, place a pillow on the seat.
- › If you need lumbar/back support, use a pillow or rolled up towel.
- › Avoid sitting on a couch, recliner, or bar stool.

### Work Surface

- › Use a table or a desk for a work surface. Avoid coffee tables and working on your lap.
- › When sitting, the work surface should be at or slightly below your elbow height.
- › If the desk is too high, raise your chair or add a cushion to the chair.

### Keyboard & Mouse

- › Use an external keyboard & mouse directly in front of you near the front edge of the work surface.
- › Keep your arms and shoulders relaxed and close to your body.
- › Keep your forearms, wrists, and hands straight.

### Monitor Placement

- › Center the monitor in front of you, in line with the keyboard, at approximately an arm's length.
- › Adjust your monitor/laptop (stack of books) so the top of the display is at or slightly below your eye height.
- › Bifocal or progressive lens wearers may need to lower their monitors to avoid tilting the head back.

### Work Environment

- › Setup a designated workspace in an area with minimal distractions.
- › Create a routine that includes a start and stop time, breaks, and getting dressed for work.
  - You can set timers on your cell phone.
- › You should change your working position frequently throughout the day in the following ways:
  - Stand up and walk around for a few minutes every hour.
  - Stand and move for breaks and phone calls when not using the computer.
  - Stretch your fingers, hands, arms, legs, and torso.
  - Stay hydrated.

Visit [genexservices.com/ergonomics](https://genexservices.com/ergonomics) for more information about our services.





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