

Preventing Repetitive Strain Injuries at Your Computer

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Many workers who use computers suffer from Cumulative Trauma Disorder (CTD), and repetitive motion is among the top cause of injuries. Working at a computer workstation puts you at risk. However, small adjustments in work habits and station setup can lead to big improvements in personal safety and health.

Arrange your work area for comfort. If you're on the phone frequently, wear a headset to avoid pinching your neck and shoulders. Place things you use most within easy reach to avoid stretching and turning your head. Copy holders should be eye-level and next to your computer.

Your chair should be comfortable and allow you to sit with your back straight and shoulders relaxed. Switch sitting position often to prevent stress on the back, neck and shoulders. Your lower back should be supported, if your chair does not provide this, buy a support or use a pillow or a rolled up towel.

When using your keyboard make sure wrists remain straight and float above the surface of your keyboard. Hold your mouse loosely. Gripping creates tension in your fingers. Use all your fingers and keep wrist in a neutral position and move your whole arm when moving the mouse to prevent strain on your fingers, hand and wrist.

Screen glare can cause eye soreness and strain. Use a light background on your screen and reduce room lighting to decrease reflections. Exercise your eyes frequently by blinking to keep eyes moist and look out a window periodically to help change your focal point.

Using good work habits during your work day will improve your risk of injury.