Home Office Ergonomic Tips

A home office should meet the same health and safety standards as those available at work, lowering stress and reducing the chance of injury caused by awkward positions. Here are a few simple tips to help you set up a healthy, ergonomic workspace at home:

- Have a dedicated workspace in your home.
- Your desk, chair and other accessories are of a comparable quality to that in your office.
- Kitchen tables and countertops offer a large amount of open workspace, but the can lead to shoulder and neck strain if too high, or back strain if the work surface is too low.
- Adjust your workstation properly: the keyboard and mouse on the same level, and close to each other, keeping your wrists in a neutral position.
- Lighting should be properly arranged; there should not be reflections or glare from your computer monitor.
- Make sure you have a fully adjustable chair, with firm lumbar support.
- If you using a laptop, use a laptop stand to elevate the monitor along with an external keyboard to keep hands and wrists straight.

Regardless of how good your working posture is, working or sitting in the same position for prolonged periods of time is not healthy. You should change your working position frequently throughout the day in the following ways:

- Make small adjustments to your chair or backrest.
- Stretch your fingers, hands, arms, and torso.
- Standup and walk around for a few minutes periodically.

For ergonomic related questions, concerns or equipment recommendations contact Risk Management Services at risk@northwestern.edu, or call (847) - 491-5610.