

COVID-19 TELEWORK ERGONOMIC TIPS

FACT SHEET NO. 88-027-0320

The measures taken to protect our community from exposure to COVID-19 have forced us to move from office-based workers to home-based workers. Within home offices, you may find yourselves in less than ideal computer work settings. We at the U.S. Army Public Health Center Ergonomics Branch want you to know that we have your backs, wrists, and necks. The resources provided below will help you to maintain good musculoskeletal health while working for many hours at your computer in your home-based work settings.

GENERAL TIPS:

- While the couch, bed, or easy chair may seem like a comfortable workstation option; using these for an extended time will result in non-neutral postures and potential musculoskeletal discomfort.
- There are some simple things you can do in your home without having to invest in new chairs and desks. For example, use a good, supportive chair if possible. If you don't have a good chair available, use a pillow as a seat cushion and/or a rolled up towel as low back support.
- Try to incorporate the 90/90/90 rule. Hips, knees, and elbows at 90 degrees.
- Kitchen tables can be too high for computer work; use a pillow to raise yourself up on your chair.
- Don't let your feet dangle; use something to support your feet if you are sitting on a high countertop height stool.
- If you have access to government-approved monitors, keyboards, and mice, use those rather than relying solely on the laptop.
- If you do have a separate government-approved monitor, the very top of the monitor should be at the same height as your eyes and placed about arm's length away from you.
- If you are on a phone or conference call, stand up! Use that time to change postures and get the blood flowing.
- Take microbreaks throughout the work day to stand up, walk around, and change position.

OTHER RESOURCES:

- Your Work-from-Home Toolbox: <https://www.humantech.com/your-work-from-home-toolbox/>
- Ideas for non-traditional workstations: <https://www.consumerreports.org/home-office/how-to-set-up-a-home-workstation-to-avoid-muscle-strain-headaches-sore-eyes/>
- And to provide some levity in this stressful time: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/17/business/work-from-home-setups-coronavirus-trnd/index.html>