Even after a training session or workstation evaluation, it is easy to slip back into old habits. This happens more as deadlines approach and it seems like the old bad habits allow for a bit more speed and efficiency. This might be true in the short run, but you will wind up paying for it later.

Creating a workstation that makes you more comfortable and prevents injury also serves to increase your efficiency and proficiency. Just as when you first begin any new task or adopt a new posture it can take time to adjust and reap the benefits of the changes. Making the deadlines might be difficult now, but you will be thankful when you are able to finish them faster without discomfort. The ergonomics program will regularly publish this newsletter in an effort to keep you updated on the latest ergonomic developments as well as remind you of the conventional advice to prevent occupational injury.

**Importance of Continuing Education**

**Featured Product**

Dragon Naturally Speaking is voice recognition software that will reduce repetitive motion by eliminating not only keyboard use but the need for a mouse as well. Most people can talk faster than they can type creating the opportunity for less stress and greater productivity. Click on the picture for more information.
The Trackbar Emotion is a roller mouse, moving pointer control from the hand and wrist into small movement finger control.
Extremely programmable, the Trackbar Emotion is an easy to use alternative that can limit hand, wrist, arm, and shoulder discomfort while keeping the hands in position for easy transitioning between the keyboard and mouse.
Click on the picture for more information.

13 Things You Should Know About Eyestrain

1. Eyestrain means different things to different people. It can be experienced as burning, tightness, sharp pains, dull pains, watering, blurring, double vision, headaches, and other sensations, depending on the person. If you have any eye discomfort caused by viewing something, you can call it eyestrain.

2. In VDT workstations, the principal factors affecting the ability to see well are:
   - glare
   - the luminance (brightness) difference between what is being looked at and its immediate environment
   - the amount of light
   - the distance between the eye and the screen and document
   - the readability of the screen and document
   - the worker’s vision and their corrective lenses

3. Watch out for direct glare. Direct glare involves a light source shining directly into the eyes --- ceiling lights, task lights, or bright windows. To determine the degree of direct glare, you can temporarily shield your eyes with a hand and notice whether you feel immediate relief.

4. Reflected glare, such as on computer screens, sometimes causes eyestrain. But its worst effect may be causing you to change your posture to an uncomfortable one, in order to see well.

5. The most overlooked cause of eyestrain in offices is contrast --- usually, a dark screen surrounded by a bright background such as a window or a lit wall. The best solution is to find a way to darken the area around the screen. This problem occurs mainly on screens with light letters on a black background.

6. How much light is right? It depends on your age, the quality of the print you're reading, and other factors. There should be plenty of light for easy reading, but too much can, depending on the person, cause eyestrain.

7. Eyes are strained more by close viewing than by distant viewing. The "right" distance for computer monitors and documents depends entirely on how clearly they can be read at a given distance. The general rule is to keep viewed material as far away as possible, provided it can be read easily!!!
For more technical information & research backup, click for a viewing distance article.

8. If you gaze at something too long, your eyes can tire. Eyes need to focus at different distances from time to time. It's a good idea to follow the "20/20 rule" -- every twenty minutes, look twenty feet away for twenty seconds.

9. If two objects are only a couple of inches different in their distance from the eyes, the eyes actually do NOT have to refocus to look from one to another. Greater distance differences, however, do require refocusing. In general, keep viewed objects at about the same distance if you have to look back and forth a lot.
How should a workstation be set up?

- **Monitor** should be an arm’s length or a bit more from your eyes. Conventional ergonomic wisdom generally advises people that the center of the screen should be where their gaze falls naturally, with the top of the screen at eye level, and that the monitor should be tilted slightly to match the angle of one’s gaze.

- **Keyboard** should be set at a height so that forearms, wrists, and hands are aligned when keyboarding, and parallel to the floor, or bent slightly down from elbow to hand — the hands are never bent back.

- **Mouse pad** should be at a height where your arm, wrist, and hand are aligned and in “neutral.”

- **Wrists**, while you are actually typing, should not rest on anything, and should not be bent up, down, or to the side. Your arms should move your hands around, and instead of resting your wrists, you should stretch to hit keys with your fingers.

- **Chair** should be adjustable and comfortable. Set it so that your thighs are either parallel to the floor or at a slight downward angle from the hips to the knees. You should sit straight, not slouching, and not straining forward to reach the keys. Stay relaxed. Anything that creates awkward reaches or angles in the body will create problems.

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10. Can computer work cause nearsightedness? Rarely, according to optometrists. It's more likely that computer work makes you realize that you need glasses.

11. Sometimes eyestrain is just a case of dry eyes. Lowering the monitor can help. Looking downward means more of the eye surface is covered by the eyelid, and two other things happen: the eyes unconsciously blink more, and they produce more lubrication.

Here's more information on why you should consider a low monitor position.

12. People who need bifocals should consider other options besides bifocals. Two good ones are:
   - Computer glasses that focus at the right distance for the computer screen.
   - Wearing contact lenses --- corrected for computer or reading distance in one eye, and for far distance (if needed) in the other eye.

13. Bifocal wearers often experience sore necks and shoulders because they have to tip their heads back to see the computer screen.
   - Lower the screen as much as possible --- if it sits on the CPU, move the CPU.

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**Featured Product**

Perhaps the most affordable articulating keyboard tray, the WorkRite Ergonomic Advantage Dual System Keyboard Platform Tray w/ Pinnacle 2 Value Arm provides the ability to fit your workstation to you instead of contorting yourself to your workstation. The platform is designed with mouse platforms on both sides allowing easy transition to mousing with the left hand to prevent repetitive strain. Click on the picture for more information.
Visit these sites for more information and instructions on how to stretch to stay comfortable and prevent injury at work

http://www.ehs.colostate.edu/WErgo/Home.aspx
http://www.shelterpub.com/_fitness/_office_fitness_clinic/OFC_how_to_str.html
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