

REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURIES



As your workload at the office increases, so do repetitive actions, such as typing, using your computer mouse and talking on the phone. These routine tasks seem simple, but they can add a level of physical stress to the emotional and mental stress of getting the job done. In fact, repetitive strain injuries have skyrocketed in the last 20 years due to the increasing reliance on workplace technology. Try these tips to reduce the strain:

Computer Monitor

Position your computer screen directly in front of you. Allow the muscles in your eyes to relax by following the 20/20/20 rule: Take a 20-second break every 20 minutes and focus on an object that is at least 20 feet away from you.

Telephone

Use your hand to support the telephone against your ear and alternate sides regularly. Do not cradle the phone between your ear and your shoulder. Consider using a headset or speaker.

Chair

Sit upright and all the way to the back. Place a support cushion or roll against the arch of your low back for lumbar spine support. Here are some tips to help you adjust your chair:

- Stand in front of the chair and adjust the height so that the highest point of the seat is just below your knee.
- Sit on the chair and make sure that your knees are bent at approximately a 90-degree angle when your feet are flat on the floor.
- Adjust the backrest forwards and backwards as well as up and down until it fits the hollow in your lower back.
- Sit upright with your arms hanging by your sides. Bend your elbows at about a right angle and adjust the armrest height until they barely touch the undersides of the elbows. Remove the armrest from the chair if the right level cannot be achieved.

Lastly, don't forget to take a quick stretch break or change position every 30 to 45 minutes. Your back, neck and shoulders will thank you for it!