

SAFETY TALK

Date:

Environmental Health and Safety Newsletter

May 2022

Ergonomics

Fitting the job environment to you

You should never have to feel like you need to work through pain to get your job done. Following the principles of ergonomics - an applied science that considers people's abilities, limitations, and characteristics in the design and evaluation of work systems – you can reduce stress and eliminate injuries associated with poor posture, overexertion and repeated tasks. The goal of ergonomics is to design systems that preserve the wellbeing of all employees, minimize the risk of injury and illness, especially musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), and maximize system as well as human performance. Whether you're lifting boxes in a warehouse, standing at a lab bench or typing on a computer, ergonomics is important to everyone.

Improper workstation setup and work design issues can lead to serious MSDs, which are injuries or disorders of the muscles, nerves, tendons, joints, cartilage and spinal discs. If you are experiencing discomfort, look for ways to reduce the following risk factors in your job:

- Overexertion while lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, reaching or stretching
- Repetitive motions
- Working in awkward positions
- Sitting or standing too long in one position
- Using excessive force

Fortunately, with early intervention and improved work and task design, MSDs can be prevented. Here are a few strategies you can use throughout your day to avoid discomfort and prevent injury:

- Take frequent breaks get up and stretch, walk around or change your scenery
- Vary the workday if possible, try to space out different types of tasks
- When using a computer, follow the 20-20-20 rule every 20 minutes, look at something about 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds
- Report pain or discomfort immediately don't wait until it becomes serious, always inform your supervisor
- If you are a supervisor, be sure to monitor your employees and make sure they are taking necessary breaks
- Contact EH&S if you would like a workstation ergonomic evaluation

Fast Stat:

Overexertion and bodily reaction is the leading nonfatal injury event involving days away from work, representing 31% of all such injuries. (Injuryfacts.nsc.org)

Department:	
Supervisor (please print):	
Supervisor Signature:	
Employee Participants: **Please Print Clearly**	Signature

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Please share the safety talk, for the noted month, with your employees and sign off on this form. All others should read for themselves. Completed forms shall be kept on file by the department.