

# **WORK SAFE TIPS!**

**For home or office**

## **WHAT IS ERGONOMICS?**

Ergonomics is the process of designing or arranging workplaces, products and systems so that they fit the people who use them. Ergonomics aims to create safe, comfortable and productive workspaces by bringing human abilities and limitations into the design of a workspace, including the individual's body size, strength, skill, speed, sensory abilities (vision, hearing), and even attitudes.



## **ERGONOMICS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT...**

-  Increases employee comfort
-  Increases employee productivity
-  Decreases employee injuries and associated costs

## ***Employer Services Coordinator & Ergonomics***

Included in this packet are some suggestions to stay healthy and ergonomically correct while working from home or in the office to reduce chronic overuse syndromes. We hope this helps you set up an optimized, healthy workspace that reduces the risk of pain, stiffness and injury for you or your employees. Please feel free to contact PTSMC directly if you have any questions. If you are an employer looking to reduce healthcare and workers' compensation-related costs, email [info@ptsmc.com](mailto:info@ptsmc.com) to inquire about our Employer Services Programs.

# WORK SAFE TIPS!

## For home or office

### DESK

It's important to set up your desk in an appropriate location. Choose a well-lit area to work. You also want to avoid sun glare, so choose an area where the sun does not directly shine on your computer screen. Try not to sit in a barstool. Your feet should be flat on the floor and your back supported which will reduce stress to your body. Below is an example of how you should set up your desk.

## Your Body at Work: Make Yourself Comfortable

Everyone's ergonomic needs are different, if you experience any problems you should report these to your supervisor.

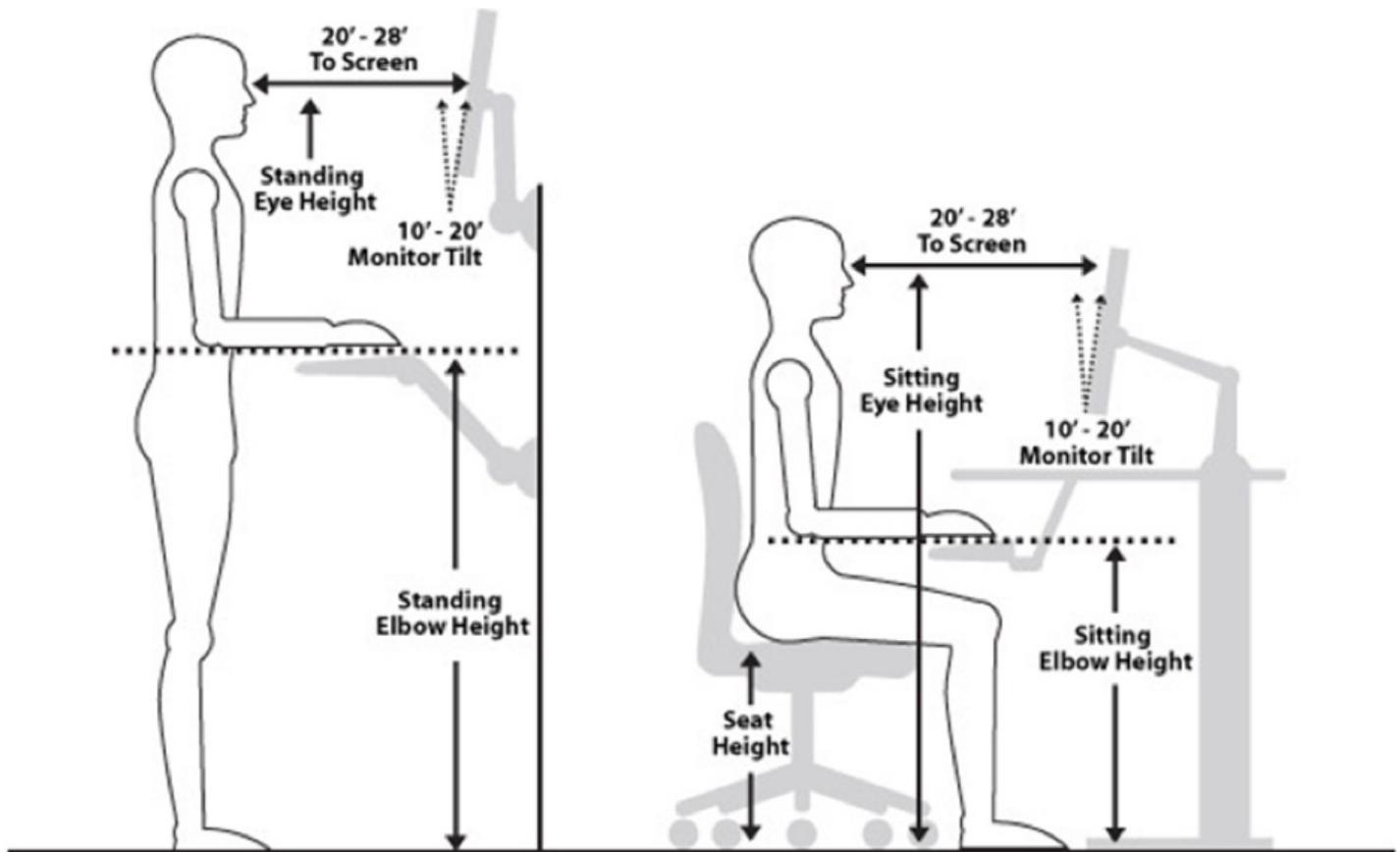
Always stack heaviest things on middle shelves.  
 Carpeting or flooring should be free of rips and tears.  
 Take a 5-minute stretch break every 1-2 hours.  
 Draw shades to reduce glare.  
 Elbows at right angles.  
 Sit straight up in chair to support pelvis and lower back.  
 Hip angle between 96-110 degrees as is comfortable.  
 Thighs approximately parallel to floor.  
 Do not sit with knees against chair. Have approximately 2-3" between knee and chair.  
 Monitor should be 18"-20" from body. Top 1/3 of screen should be at or below eye level.  
 Monitor perpendicular to window to reduce glare.  
 Keyboard should be on slight negative tilt, about 1" above thighs.  
 Mouse in plane or slightly above plane of keyboard. Avoid reaching for mouse.  
 Knee angle at 90 degrees with feet in front of you.  
 Feet flat on floor or on footrest.

**SAFETY SAVES With IWIF**

There are general guidelines with these suggestions. You need your own personal safety assessment to verify the application of guidelines to your body and health under your responsibility. For more information on PPT's safety limited liability management services, call 1-800-367-3673.

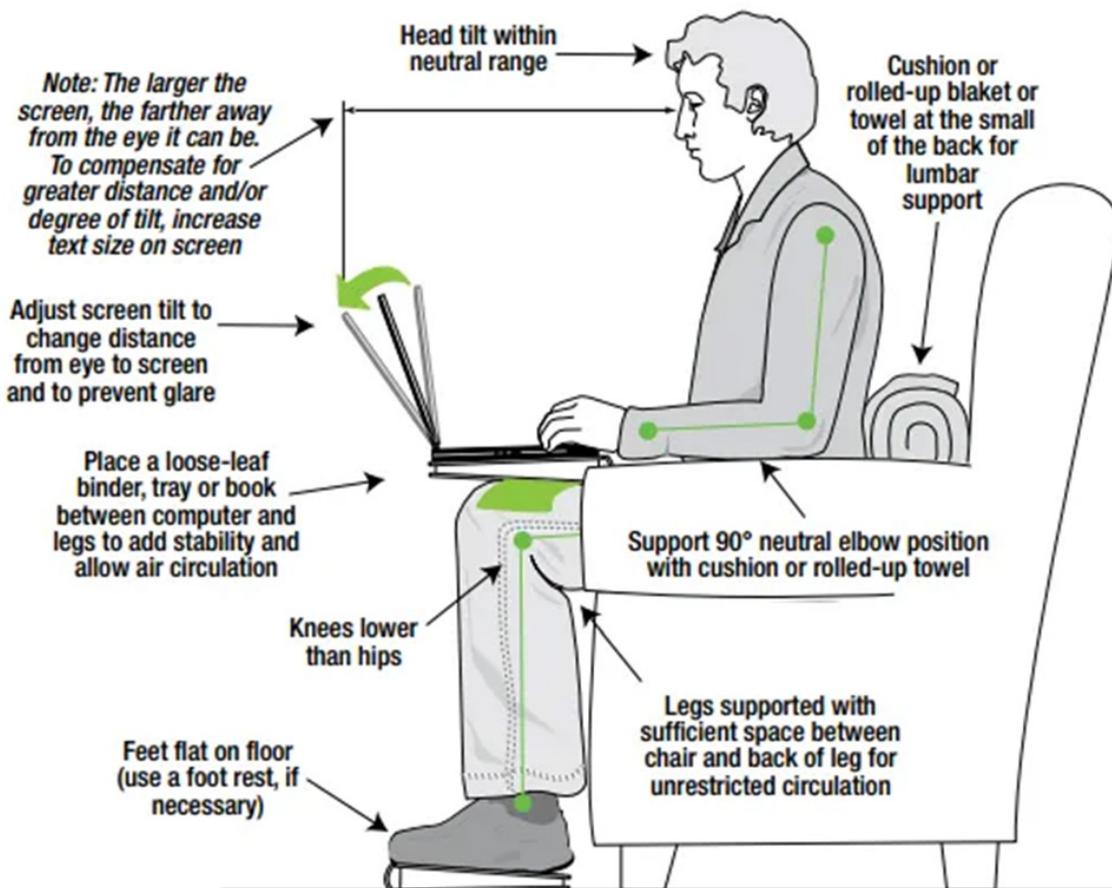
### SITTING VS. STANDING

The latest reports suggest that you should spend an equal amount of time sitting and standing. If this is possible, keep in mind that when you're standing, the positions of your screen, shoulders, elbows, wrists and hands should remain in the same positions as when you're sitting. If standing is not an option, take the time to go on a short walk or stretch. Below is a diagram of ergonomically-correct standing and sitting positions.



### USING A LAPTOP

If you use a laptop, as most of us do, you should stand and stretch more frequently. Below is a suggestion for how you should sit while using a laptop to stay in a proper ergonomic position.



### STRETCHING

Stretching is always a good idea. It helps reduce stress, increases energy and offers a short break from looking at your computer. Below are a few stretches that can be performed a few times a day. Hold each one for 10 seconds.



SHOULDER STRETCH



SHOULDER AND NECK STRETCH



WRIST STRETCH 1



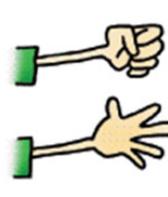
WRIST STRETCH 2



UPPER BACK SIDE TO SIDE



BACK STRETCH



WRIST & FINGERS  
clench & straighten



CHIN TUCK



ELBOW FLARE  
SQUEEZE BACK



SIDE TO SIDE  
TURN OF NECK



SHOULDER ROLLS



REGULAR WALKS  
AROUND THE OFFICE

### **EYE STRAIN**

Eye strain can occur when you stare at a computer screen for extended periods of time. The symptoms of eye strain include headaches, blurred vision, dried eyes and discomfort. Below are some tips on how to reduce eye strain.

**5 TIPS TO REDUCE EYE STRAIN**

**STRAIGHTEN UP**  
Adjust your chair so that your legs are at a right angle with your knees, and arms near your sides, shoulders and neck relaxed, wrists slightly pointed down, back supported

**FACE FORWARD**  
Have the screen and keyboard straight in front of you, never to the side

**EYES AHEAD**  
Screen must be positioned at your correct focal length so you can focus easily, and not strain your neck; usually the monitor will be slightly below your natural sight line

**TAKE A BREAK**  
Take pauses and breaks every 20 – 30 minutes, and look away from the monitor, blinking periodically to refresh vision

**ORGANIZE YOUR SPACE**  
Arrange documents around your computer so you can see them easily, without bending or twisting

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### PHONES

While working at home, you are more likely to use your cell phone to make calls. Instead of holding it at your ear, creating neck strain and shoulder discomfort, use the speaker option and hold the phone in front of you rather than setting it down on a table.

# TEXT NECK

*It's a real pain in the neck!*



**Text neck:** A condition resulting from contorting our necks in unnatural positions to view mobile devices. It can cause pain, pinched nerves, and even issues like herniated discs or other problems that might require surgery.

#### **BEST WAYS TO PREVENT TEXT NECK:**

- 1) Hold your phone higher to read/text
- 2) Take regular breaks from your phone
- 3) See your PT to alleviate pain and learn best practices!

#### **EXERCISES TO ALLEVIATE TEXT NECK:**

Exaggerated Nod



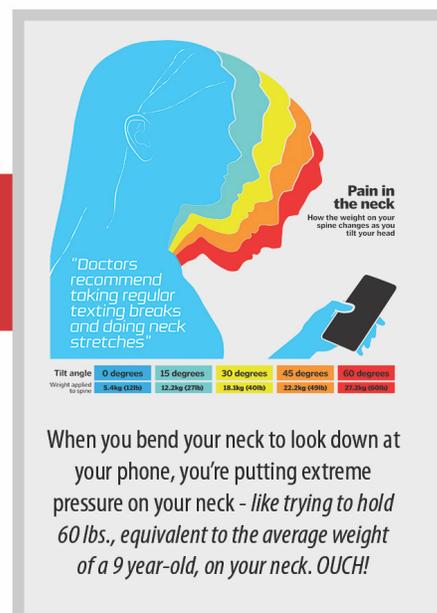
Cat-Cow



Bent-over Stretch



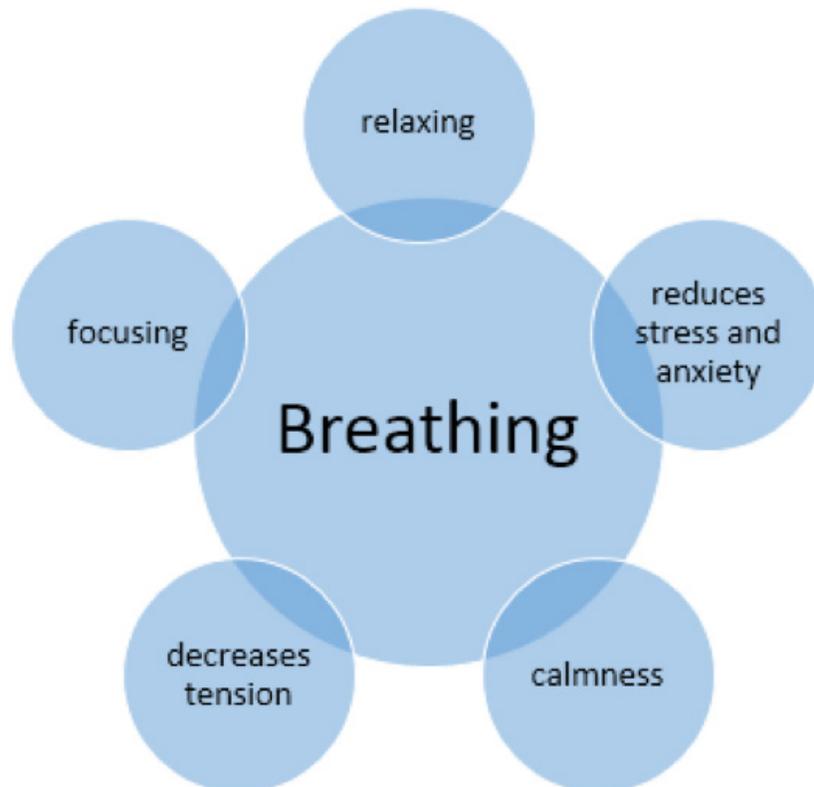
Chin Tuck



### **DESTRESS**

Remember to take time to breathe in order to relieve stress and release muscle tension. Try breathing in this pattern:

1. Inhale to the count of 4
2. Hold for a second or two
3. Exhale to the count of 8
4. Repeat 4 or 5 time while you relax the muscles of your face and shoulders



# Is Working From Home Becoming a **PAIN?**



## Neck and Shoulder Pain

Causes of neck and shoulder pain can include poor posture as a result of low monitors, holding cell phones, or hunching, as well as tension from stress.

## Wrist and Hand Pain

Wrist pain and/or pain in your hand or fingers is often a result of holding your hands in an unnatural, “non-neutral” positions for extended periods. Constant typing, mouse-clicking, and holding a phone for too long can cause pain.

## Back Pain

Sitting all day and hunching forward puts immense pressure on your spine, and lack of movement or stretching only makes it worse.

## Headaches

Headaches are often caused by a mix of external and internal factors, such as eye fatigue from poor lighting or staring at screens, stress-related jaw clenching, or neck/shoulder/back pain radiating up to the skull.

## Leg Aches/Cramps

Long periods of sitting can cause poor blood circulation to your leg muscles, which can result in pain, aches and cramps.

## Some quick tips for preventing/alleviating pain:

- Consider the ergonomics of your workspace; screen-height, chair type, keyboard position, etc.
- Get up and move every 15-20 minutes; also, stretch in the morning and get active during the day.
- Roll up a towel and rest your back against it and your chair for better posture.
- Every hour, do a routine of chin tucks, seated spinal twists, shoulder rolls and wrist extensions.

**PTSMC OFFERS SAFE CARE IN CLINIC OR VIA TELEHEALTH**  
**Most insurances accepted, no doctor referral needed.**



**DON'T LEARN TO “LIVE WITH IT,” SET  
UP A CLINICAL OR TELEHEALTH VISIT  
& GET IT TREATED TODAY!**

If issues persist for more than 1-2 weeks, you should get an expert assessment before it becomes a bigger problem!



# WHO WE ARE

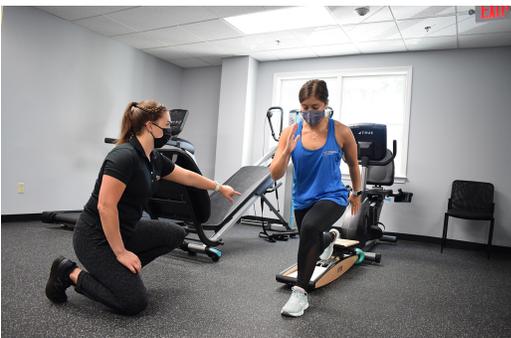


**29** CONNECTICUT  
LOCATIONS

Avon  
Branford  
Danbury  
East Hampton  
Essex  
Fairfield  
Glastonbury  
Groton  
Guilford  
Middletown

Naugatuck  
New Haven  
New London  
New Milford  
Newington  
Orange  
Plainville  
Shelton  
Simsbury  
Southbury

Southington  
Wallingford  
Waterbury  
Watertown  
West Hartford  
Westbrook  
Wethersfield  
Windsor  
\*Yale New Haven



**Hands-on care.  
Flexible scheduling.  
*NO REFERRAL  
NEEDED!***

## Treatment and Services Include:

- Orthopedic Injuries • Sports Injuries • Concussions • Osteoarthritis
- Neck/Back Pain • Corrective Exercises • Tendinitis • Sprains/Strains
- Manual Therapy • Post-op Rehabilitation • Workers' Comp • Dry Needling
- Vestibular & Vertigo • Golf Therapy • Women's Health • TMJ Disorder

Learn more at: [www.PTSMC.com](http://www.PTSMC.com)