Coastal West Sussex Federation

POSTURE AT THE WORKPLACE

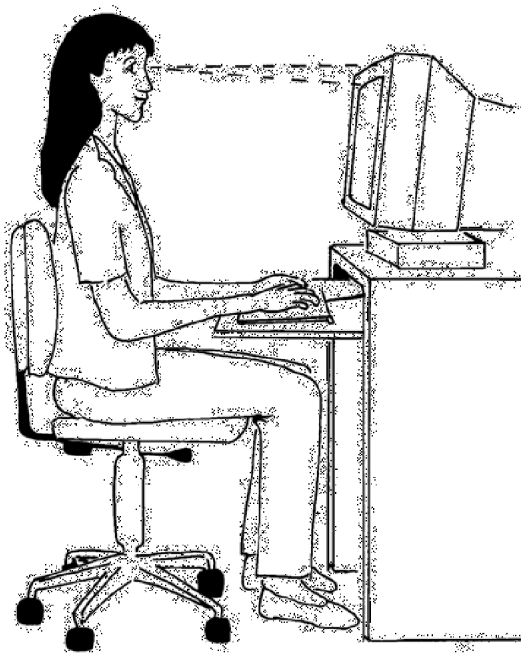
Neck and Back Pain

Pain can be an indication of excessive stress in the joints of the neck and the shoulder muscles and can radiate down the back and into the arms. It can occur with poor posture during daily deskbound work but can be eased by improving static and dynamic postures at the workplace.

Frequent causes include:

- Poor alignment of the body. Sustained static posture.
- Repetitive actions like twisting.
- Poor arrangement and adjustment of furniture.
- Lack of support for the body
- Excessive use of the muscles that tire easily.

Optimal position



Head: Centred over shoulders and an arms length from the monitor; top of screen should be horizontal or just above eye level.

Chair: Slanted slightly forward; the edge should end 3 fingers from the back of your knees.

Neck: Held upright, without strain. Chin is tucked in.

Shoulders: Held down and backwards; being relaxed and similar to that during resting.

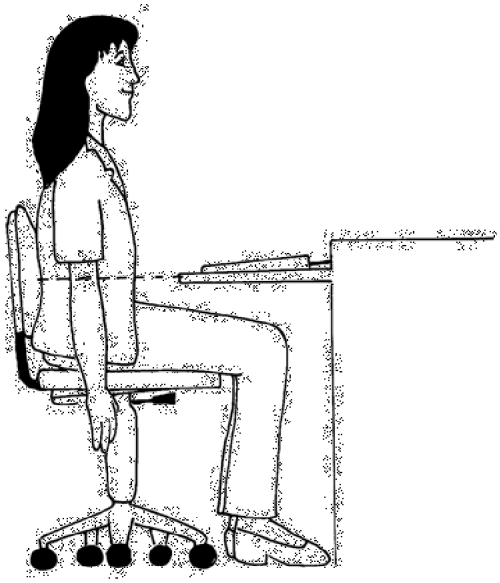
Back: Sit upright with good support at the upper and lower back to maintain the S-shaped curve of your back.

Elbows: Maintained relaxed and close to the body, and 90 degrees to the working surface.

Wrists: Relaxed and held neutral over the keyboard, without resting on the work surface.

Lower Limbs: Hips are 90 degrees to the body and knees slightly lower than the hips with feet "at on the "or on a support.

Work Surface



- The height of the work surface should be at the level of the elbow when sitting relaxed.
- A work surface slightly tilted towards you can reduce neck strain during reading and writing.
- As much movement as possible should be in close proximity of the body, with essential items within easy reach to prevent frequent reaching.
- Hold the mouse loosely in the palm of your hand.
- The mouse should be placed next to the keyboard and at the same level as the elbow and keyboard.
- When using the mouse, move the entire arm, not just the wrist.
- Take breaks or change position after 30-40 minutes of work.
- Alternate among different tasks to avoid straining your muscles.