

AT HOME WORKPLACE ERGONOMICS



The current COVID-19 virus has caused unprecedented “Stay Safe at Home” orders which has caused more “work at home” situations than ever before. This calls for all employees to become personally aware and responsible for good ergonomic practices to avoid injuries when performing work duties in a home office situation.



Best Practices in Home Office Ergonomics

- **The Goal — Creating a Safe Home Workplace**
- **Understanding Ergonomic-related Risks**
- **Understanding the Warning Signs of Overexertion**
- **Evaluation of Home Workstation area and practices**
- **Making sure you take appropriate Rest and Exercise breaks for the protection of your health and safety**



Your employer and the Pacific Union California Workers’ Compensation plan has prepared these resources to assist you in evaluating home office workstations for good ergonomic practices and tips on how you can maintain your health while working from home during this pandemic today or in the months ahead.

Ergonomics at Home



Many of us are dealing with a new workspace, our homes. While we might not have everything we would have at work, there are steps we can take to protect our bodies from ergonomic issues like neck, back or wrist pain.

SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS

Your workspace might be a kitchen table or desk, so use a little creativity. Here are some ideals to strive for when creating a computer workstation:

- Assume a relaxed, tension-free posture in your neck and shoulders
- Place your elbows at a 90° angle
- Keep your wrists protected from sharp or hard edges, and in a neutral position
- Make sure the mouse is at the same height and distance from the screen as the keyboard
- Ensure adequate lower back support
- Keep your knees at a 90° angle
- Keep your hips at a 90° angle
- Position your feet flat on the floor or supported by a footrest
- Make sure the height of your work surface is appropriate
- Sit at the correct distance from the monitor: about 25"
- Keep computer monitor at, or slightly below, eye level

See what you have around your home to help you achieve this. Possibly prop your monitor up on some boxes to get it to the right height, or use boxes or tubs as a footrest, if needed. Perhaps place a towel under your wrists to protect from sharp edges.

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR EYES

Working from home, you will likely have many hours behind a computer screen. Just as your body needs rest, so do your eyes. The Mayo Clinic recommends the following tips to help prevent eyestrain:

- Remember to blink – it will create tears to moisten your eyes and can keep them fresh
- Look away from your screen often – follow the “20-20-20 rule”: Every 20 minutes, look at something about 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds
- Make sure you have good lighting and avoid glares on your screen – perhaps position a desk lamp nearby and avoid putting screens directly in front of a window or white wall
- Adjust the font size on your computer to make it easy to read

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

PC Magazine:

<https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/everything-you-need-to-set-up-an-ergonomic-home-office>

INC Magazine:

<https://www.inc.com/minda-zetlin/ergonomics-home-office-work-at-home-setup-spinal-back-health.html?cid=search>



Proud Member

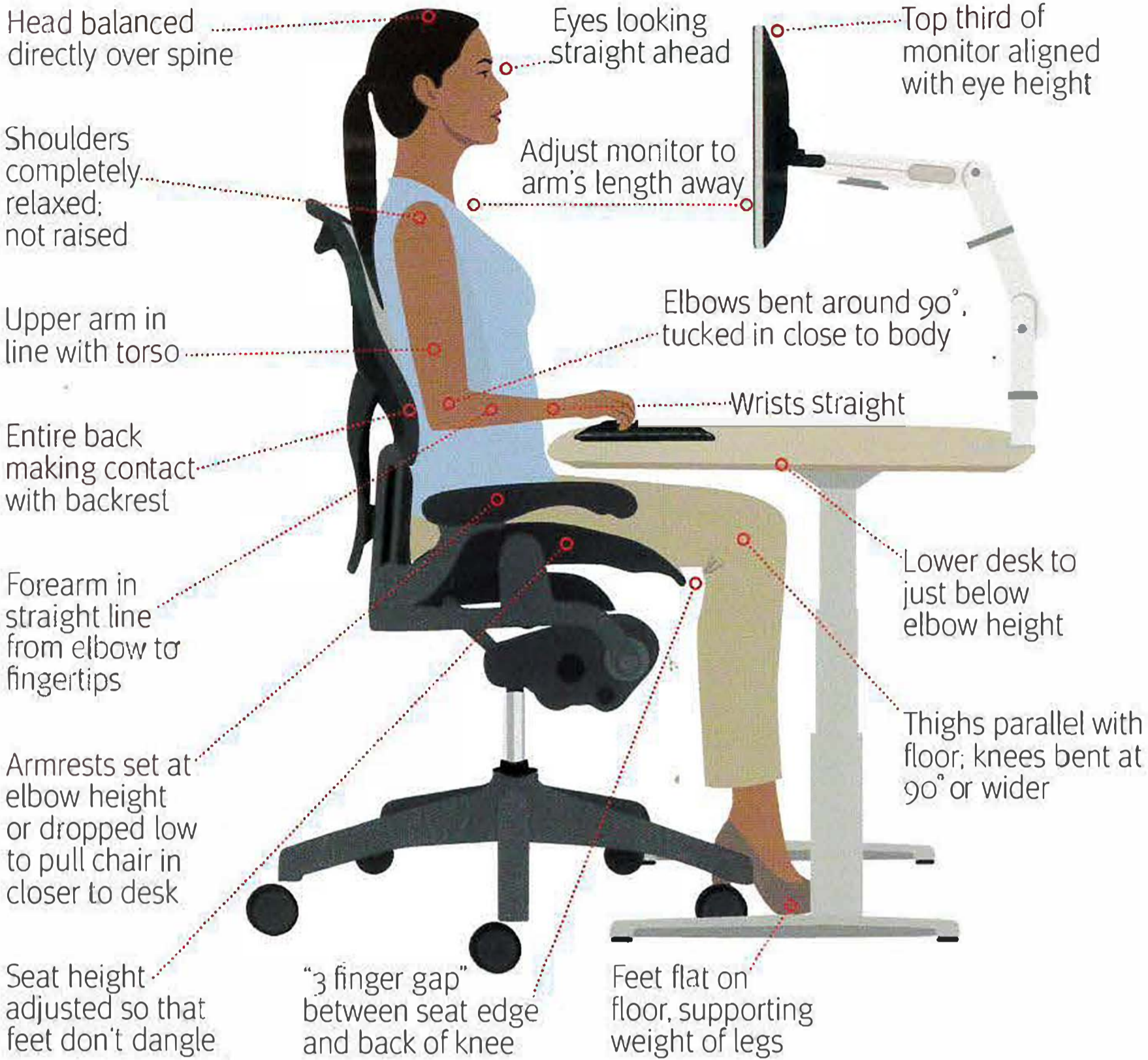
Eyes feeling strained?

- Don't forget to blink.
- Look away and give your eyes a break.
- Be mindful of lighting and glare.
- Adjust your monitor properly.
- Increase your computer's type size.

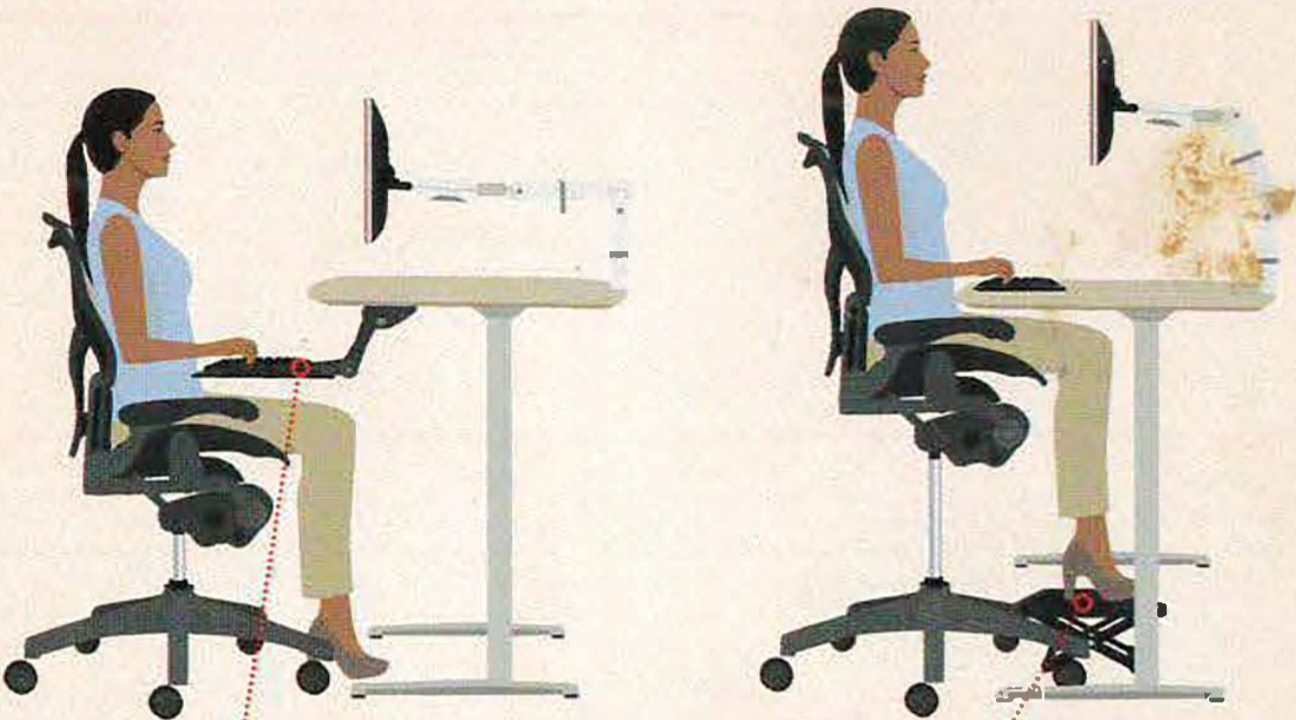




GUIDE TO ERGONOMIC SEATED POSTURE



Non-adjustable desk? These tools can help you get to the right height.



With feet flat on the floor and knees at 90°, lower the keyboard tray to just below elbow height, shoulders relaxed.

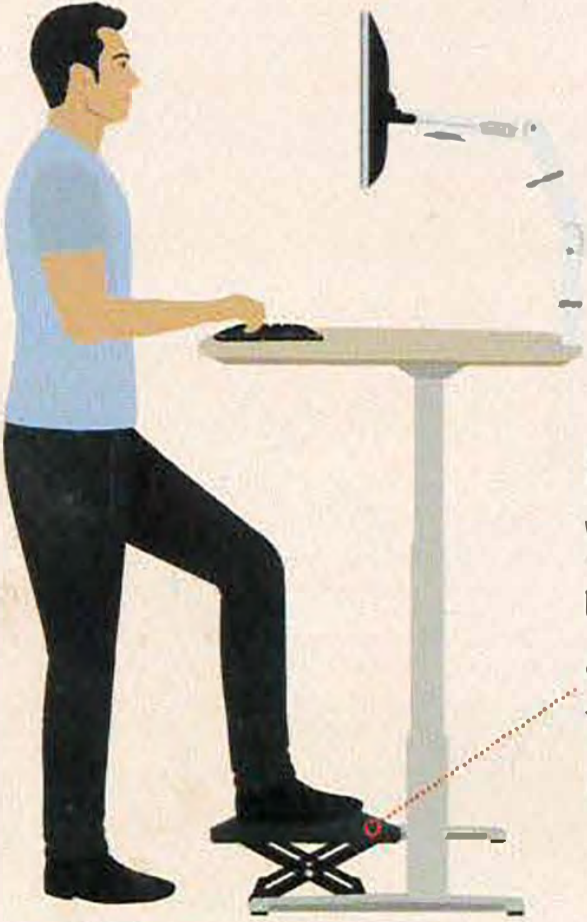
Raise chair until elbows are slightly above desk height, then put a foot stool beneath feet to keep knees at 90°.



GUIDE TO ERGONOMIC STANDING POSTURE



The more movement and change in postures you do, the better you will feel.



While standing, alternate resting each foot on a foot stool to relieve tension in the spine and increase circulation.

Avoid a pain in the neck

1. Slowly touch your ear to your shoulder.
Repeat on other side.
2. Place hands behind your head,
squeeze shoulder blades together.
3. Bring the top of your shoulders
toward your ears.
Hold for 3 to 5 seconds.



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Don't forget to stretch

1. Stretch out your arm and hand.
2. Slowly rotate your wrist until you feel a stretch. Hold for 3 to 5 seconds.
3. Rotate palm up until you feel a stretch.
4. Repeat 3 times.



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CREATE A REGULAR SCHEDULE

While what is “regular” might be different depending on your situation – for example if you have kids at home with you – but keeping to a routine will be helpful. When the lines between work and home are blurred, you might have a tendency to work longer hours. Here are some tips to give your body the rest it needs:

- Remember to eat regular meals and drink lots of water – it’s a good way to keep your body and brain fueled, and a chance to step away from work for a bit
- Stretch your arms, legs, neck and back on a regular basis – you might want to create “meetings” that pop up in your email to remind you to stretch
- Get up and go for a walk – whether it’s walking around home or a quick walk outside, keeping your body moving can help with blood flow and prevent strain
- Create a stopping point for your day – do the work you can in the schedule you create, but set an endpoint so you can get good sleep and some downtime for your next day

If you find you are experiencing pain while working, report it to your supervisor right away. Pain should never be part of the job. Asking others for help can provide solutions you may not have thought of. Consider taking a photo of yourself in your workstation and sending it to your safety contact for review. They can likely provide alternative ideas and perhaps specific stretches to help with your issues. We are all in this together, so use all the resources you have available to keep your body healthy.

Resources provided by:
Azure Hills Risk Management Consulting
P. O. Box 1052, Redlands, CA 92373

