

Ergonomics for Telecommuters

People who work from home on computers have the same ergonomic needs as people who work in the office. This fact sheet is intended to help you make adjustments in your home “office” to keep you comfortable.

The Foundation of an Ergonomic Workstation

- Whether you sit at a desk or kitchen table, the basics of ergonomics remain the same.
 - Find a chair or stool that will allow you to sit comfortably, preferably with your feet flat on the floor or otherwise supported. If you need a footrest, but do not have a manufactured one, you can create them with boxes, pillows or other such household supplies.
 - You may use a manufactured lumbar support or create a support using a pillow or a rolled-up towel.
 - Get up and move! Set a timer for yourself to get up every 45 minutes or so to move. Walk around. Stretch your muscles. Relax those muscles before going back to work.
 - Proper lighting is important. Position your computer away from windows as glare can be a problem. An ideal light will softly flood the area with light without causing glare or shadows; pole lamps are good choices.
- If using a desktop computer, make sure the monitor(s) is within 17-24 inches from your eyes.
- If using a laptop, you should adjust the monitor so that you can sit up straight and look directly at the screen without bending your neck or leaning forward. Use a manufactured laptop stand or make one by using books or boxes to achieve the correct height for you.
- If possible, use peripherals with a laptop such as an external keyboard and a computer mouse. These will enable you to maintain a neutral position for your hands, wrists and arms.

Quick Take

- Set up your home computer workspace as you would your office workstation.
- Use what you have at home to improve the ergonomics of your workplace.
- Take regular breaks. Stop working at the computer every 45 minutes or so to allow your muscles to recover.
- For additional ideas, go to [OSHA](https://www.osha-slc.gov/).
- If you have any questions, contact EHRHS at (215) 707-2520.

