

HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

SUBJECT: BODY MECHANICS - COMPUTERS

POLICY NO. 463

PURPOSE:

To provide employees with guidelines to prevent back injury due to poor body mechanics and to reduce or prevent repetitive motion injuries when using computers.

POLICY:

All workforce members who perform repetitive activities in their job assignments should personalize their work station/area in accordance with body mechanics/computer guidelines to provide a comfortable work environment. Ergonomic safety is the responsibility of both the staff and supervisor.

GUIDELINES:

I. POSTURE

- Feet should be flat on the floor. Knees level with hips, lower back supported. Your weight should be shifted slightly forward. Avoid positions in which your body is twisted.

II. CHAIR

- Adjust backrest to maintain the lower curve of your back. A towel or pillow can be substituted if the backrest is not adequate.
- Armrests can relieve fatigue in the shoulders and arms.

III. WORK SURFACE

- Allow leg room underneath desk.
- When necessary, a document holder can be used and positioned at 0-20 degrees below eye level.

IV. HANDLING OF HANDS, WRISTS AND FINGERS

- Pick tools that allow you to grip with a straight wrist.
- When using a keyboard, arms should be at your side with elbows at a right angle.
- Reduce wrist and elbow strain by changing grips whenever possible. Vary grips during prolonged work periods.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 3/01/99

SUPERSEDES:

REVIEWED: 2/02, 9/04, 6/06, 11/10, 10/14, 3/18

REVISED: 6/06, 11/10, 10/14, 3/18

REVIEWED COMMITTEE:

APPROVED BY: _____

Kim McKenzie, RN, MSN, CPHQ
Chief Executive Officer

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Chief Medical Officer

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Chief Nursing Officer

Signature(s) on File.

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V. COMPUTER/VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINAL

- The top of the screen should be positioned just below eye level (0-20 degrees).
- Avoid glare on the screen. To reduce glare, try:
 1. Adjusting screen lighting and contrast.
 2. Changing position of screen.
 3. Keeping shiny objects away from the screen.
- Sit about arm's length away with screen tilted back lightly.
- Clean your computer screen regularly. Dust and dirt can blur the screen and may strain the eyes.
- Place your mouse pad at the same height as your keyboard.

VI. EYE CARE

- 22-25 inches is the best distance to view a computer monitor.
- To relax you periodically (every 15 minutes), look up at distant objects to relax your eyes for one minute.
- Your blink rate is decreased five times when using a VDT. You need to blink 8-15 times per minute to keep the eyes moist. An artificial supplement may also be used (i.e., Refresh, Tears Naturale, etc.).

REFERENCES:

DHS Policy No. 901 Injury and Illness Prevention Program.

Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Policy No. 462 Ergonomics Program.

Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Policy No. 448 Injury and Illness Prevention Program.