INJURY PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT
BEST PRACTICES: Ergonomic Laptop Use

Laptop Postural Challenges

- The screen is often too low, which may result in a forward head or forward flexed posture.

- The front edge of the laptop and/or sharp edge of the table may dig into the forearms.

- Shoulder tension or hiking can result when unconsciously trying to relieve the forearm pressure.

- Shoulder tension or hiking can result if the keying surface is too high.

Simple Adjustment to Improve Posture and Comfort

- Elevate the back edge of the laptop on a book or binder. This helps to:

    - Bring the screen higher for improved neck posture.

    - Allow the worker to lean back into the chair and use the backrest for spine support.

    - Support the wrists in neutral keying posture.

    - Eliminate the pressure point between the forearms and the front edge of the laptop or table.

    - Limit shoulder hiking and decrease shoulder tension.

Additional Tips

- To limit neck flexion, place needed papers or reference materials on a 3-ring binder as pictured above to position them at an angle.

- Use a downward gaze to view the screen and avoid dropping the head forward.

- Use a pillow when needed to support the spine. Spinal muscles are least stressed with the ear, shoulder, and hip in vertical alignment.

- Place the laptop on a pillow to raise the screen and keyboard when working from a chair or couch.

- Working from a standing position can provide an occasional healthy change. Relocate the laptop to a surface that is approximately elbow height.

    - Elevating the back edge of the laptop as suggested above may be helpful if the standing work surface height is above elbow level.

    - Elevating the front edge of the laptop as pictured at right may be helpful if the standing work surface height is below elbow level.

- An external mouse can be useful to provide a break from the laptop's touchpad.

- Route charging cords thoughtfully. Avoid creating trip hazards for yourself or others.

- Reduce digital eye strain with the 20-20-20 Rule:

    - Every 20 minutes

    - Look 20 feet away

    - For 20 seconds
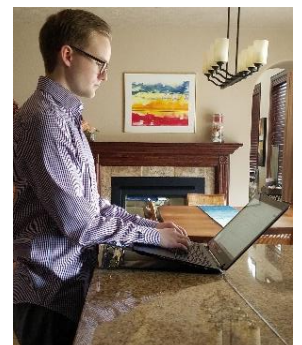
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