

## HEALTHY SITTING

How you sit at your desk can be a major contributory factor/cause of back or neck pain. The information in this leaflet is designed to give you some pointers to help with your workstation set up. Remember you may still need to speak to your employer about having a proper workstation assessment carried out.

### **THE CHAIR**

- This should be set up to suit the user.
- Seat in neutral or slight forward tilt.
- Feet positioned flat on the floor or on a footrest.
- The chair should fit comfortably under the desk with clearance for the thighs and chair arms.
- The seat base should support the length of your thighs but should not dig in to the back of the knees.
- The back should be adjustable to support you.

### **FOOT REST**

- Use if you are unable to place your feet flat on the floor.
- Knees should be bent to 90 degrees.
- Foot rest should be large enough to move feet when placed on it.
- The need for a footrest may change in women if they are wearing high heels.

### **THE DESK**

- Roughly at elbow height when sitting at desk.
- Tidy and free from clutter.
- Screen in front of user.
- Room underneath for the chair to move freely.

### **THE KEYBOARD**

- At elbow height.
- Keep elbows by side when typing.
- Should be reached comfortably – keep close to edge of desk.

### **THE SCREEN**

- Directly in front of user.

- Arms length away from user.
- 1 screen only.
- In slight backward tilt.
- Free from glare.
- Top of the screen between eye level and 10cm below.
- If wearing varifocal lenses – the screen will need to be lower as the bottom part of the lens is used for reading – single vision lenses for computer work can be advantageous.

### **THE MOUSE**

- Position close to keyboard within easy reach.
- Appropriately sized for the user's hand.
- Don't grip too tight.
- Mouse should have a long tail or be cordless.
- Clean regularly – if dirty causes increased drag causing tension.

### **THE TELEPHONE**

- Avoid writing/typing while cradling phone receiver.
- Use headset if frequently using phone and PC simultaneously.
- Position within easy reach.

### **DOCUMENT HOLDER**

- Position next to the monitor at screen height.
- Should be used if doing lots of copy work/typing,

### **REGULAR BREAKS**

- Movement is essential for good spinal health.
- Breaks should be taken before the onset of fatigue.
- Change position and activity during break.
- Short frequent breaks are preferable eg every 30 – 40 minutes as posture deteriorates the longer that we sit.
- Take breaks away from screen and not surfing the internet.

If you are still having problems with your workstation Aberdeen Physiotherapy can carry out an assessment for you and produce a report for your employer. Further details and costs can be provided on request.

