

Office Ergonomic Coordinators' Meeting March 10, 2021

Virtual Ergonomic Evaluations for Teleworkers

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Introduction

If you are teleworking, it's important to continue to practice good ergonomics. Be careful with the temptations to sit in non-standard set-ups e.g., the bed, the coffee table or the couch using your laptop or taking phone calls. These habits may make you susceptible to ergonomic risks that aren't present in a typical office environment. Here are a few ways to improve your home office ergonomics.

ERGO CHECKLIST

OPTIMAL STATIONS HAVE A:

- ✓ DEDICATED WORK AREA
- ✓ COMFORTABLE CHAIR
- ✓ KEYBOARD & MOUSE
- ✓ SUPPORTED POSTURE
- ✓ BREAK REMINDER



What is Ergonomics?

Ergonomics is making the interaction between the worker and the work environment as safe, efficient and comfortable as possible. That means, ensuring your workstation is set up in a way that won't cause your body any aches and pains after a prolonged period but rather supports a neutral seated or standing position at your workstation at the office or home.



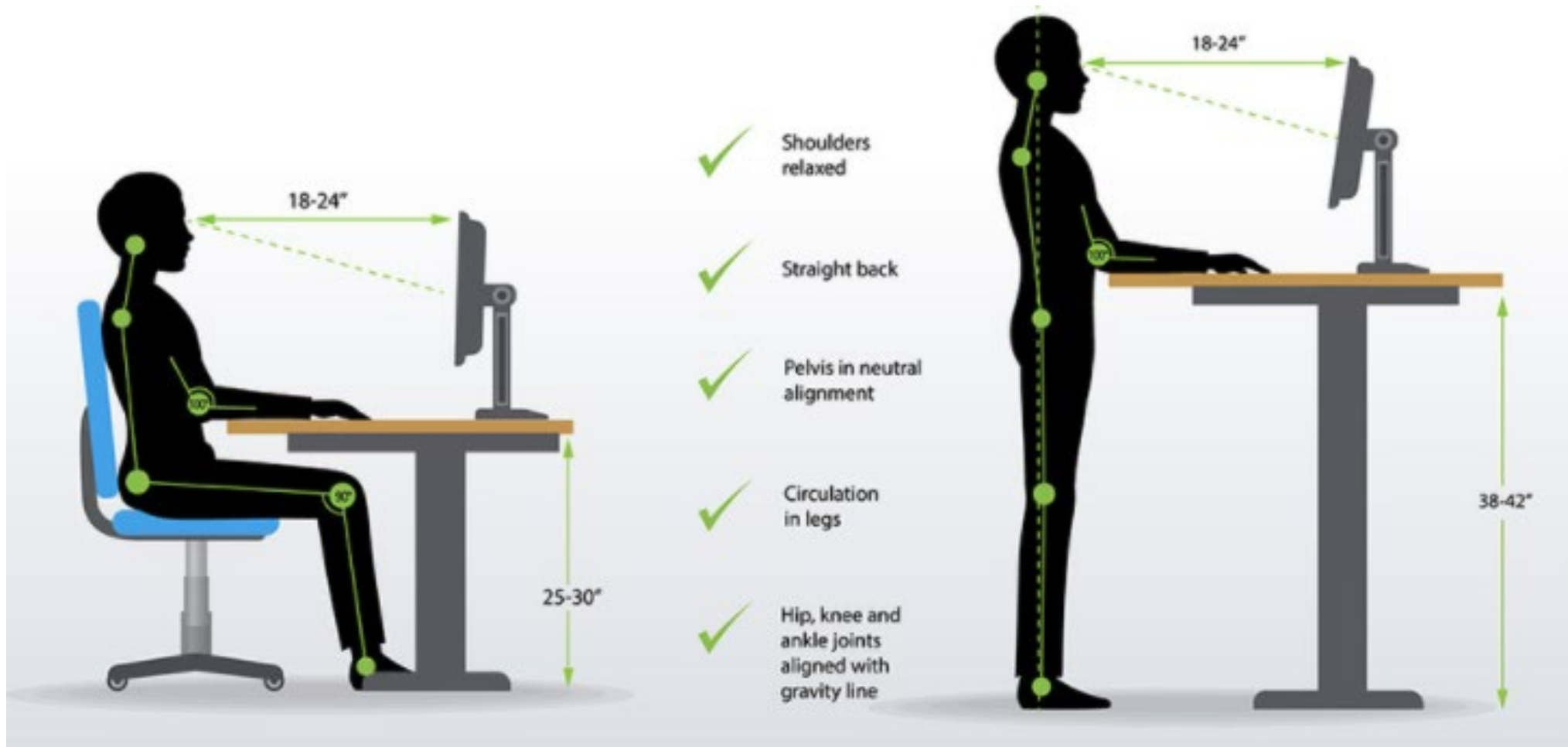
Virtual Ergonomic Evaluations for Teleworkers

Root Cause Analysis

1. Define the problem (Ergonomic Risk Factors)
2. Gather Data and Evidence (side profile image of EE engaging workstation)
3. Identify all harmful ergonomic risk factors that might be a “root cause” (comparing EE image to infographic of ideal neutral seated or standing position)
4. Identify solutions that will mitigate the ergonomic risk factors (see Telework Tips for language)
5. Identify solutions that will 1) reasonably prevent a recurrence; 2) are practical; 3) do NOT cause or introduce other new, unforeseen problems (unintended consequences)
6. Communicate risk factors and solutions to employee in a way they will understand
7. Ensure effectiveness by following-up with the employee to gather feedback



Ideal Neutral Seated or Standing Position

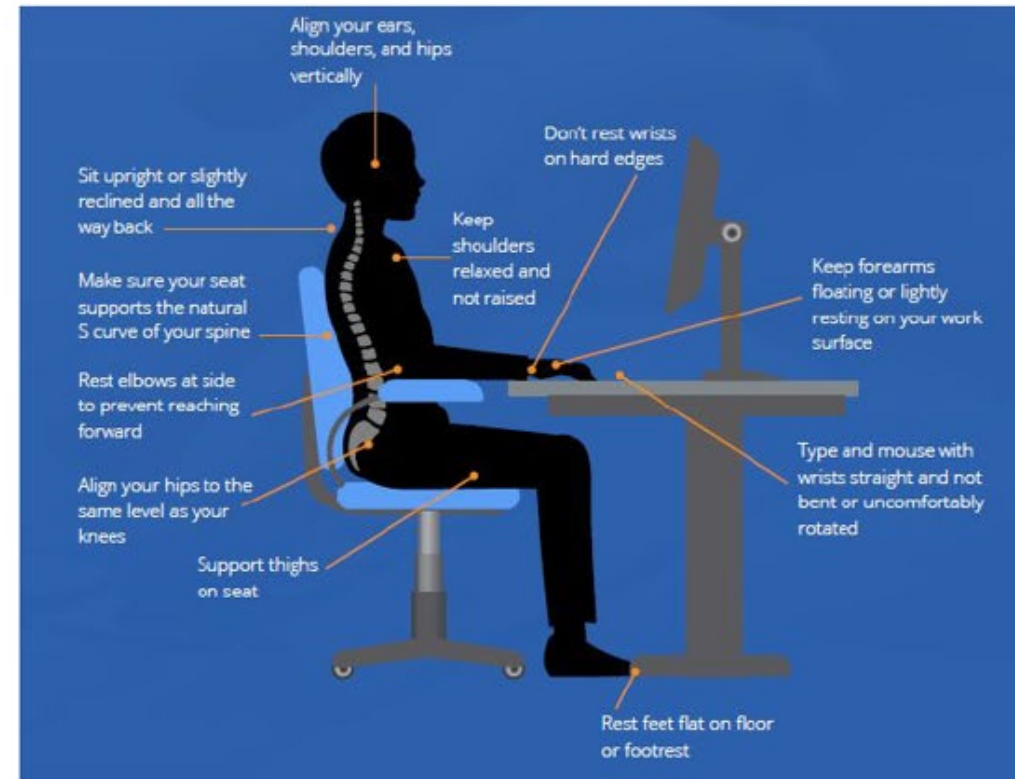


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Employee Side Profile, **Before** Changes



Ideal Neutral Seated Position



Ergonomic Risk Factors Identified:

Contact stress to the thighs, buttocks, back and forearms from ridged surfaces

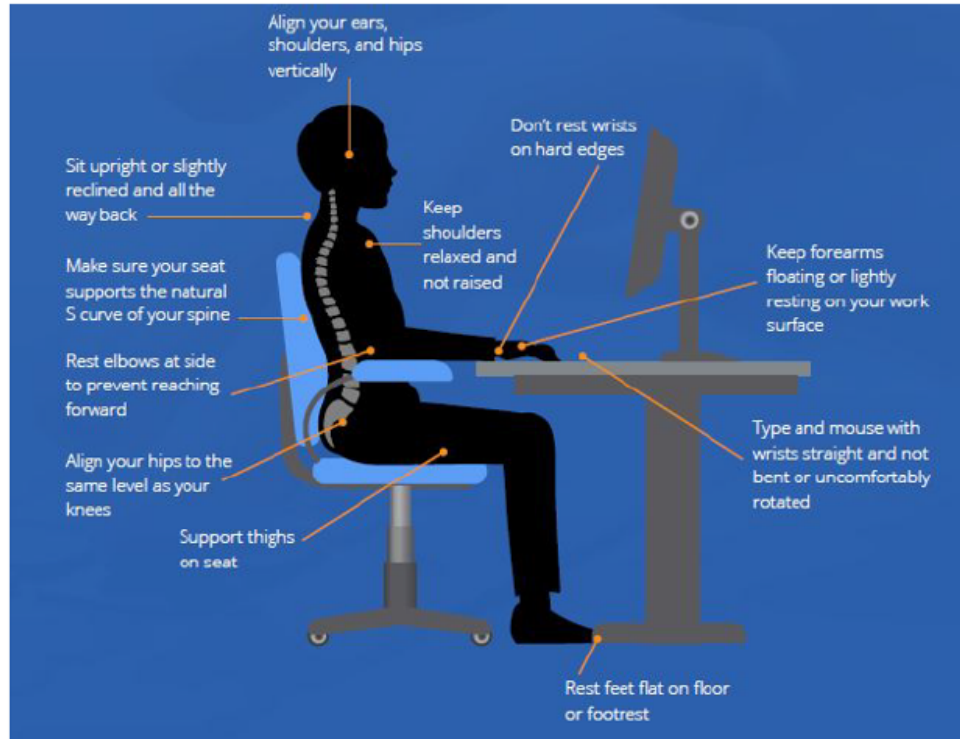
Awkward Posture of the neck to get eyes to screen

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Employee Side Profile, After Changes



Ideal Neutral Seated Position



Adjustments to Neutral:

Add cushion to chair to reduce contact stress from ridged surfaces.

Place a box under the laptop to improve neck alignment

Connected a keyboard and mouse to laptop to improve posture

Put a shoe box under feet to keep knees at a 90-100-degree angle (could add a non-slip pad under if needed)

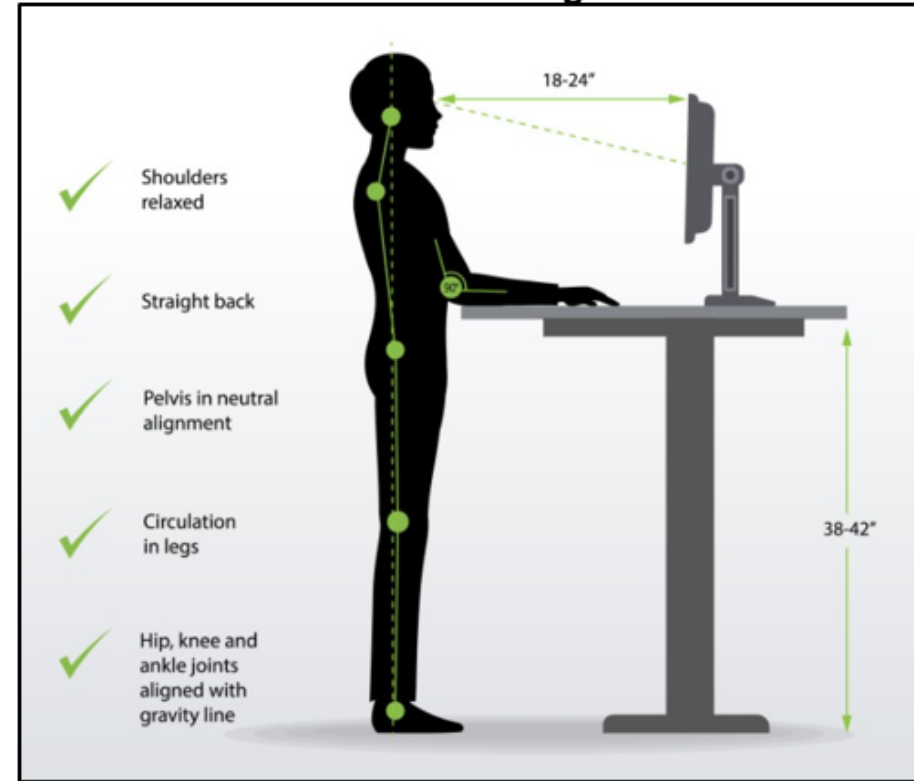
Rest wrists on a folded towel to improve wrist position and reduce contact stress

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Employee Side Profile, **Before** Changes



Ideal Neutral Standing Position



Ergonomic Risk Factors Identified:

Contact stress from the ground to feet and countertop to waist

Awkward posture of the neck to get eyes to the monitor

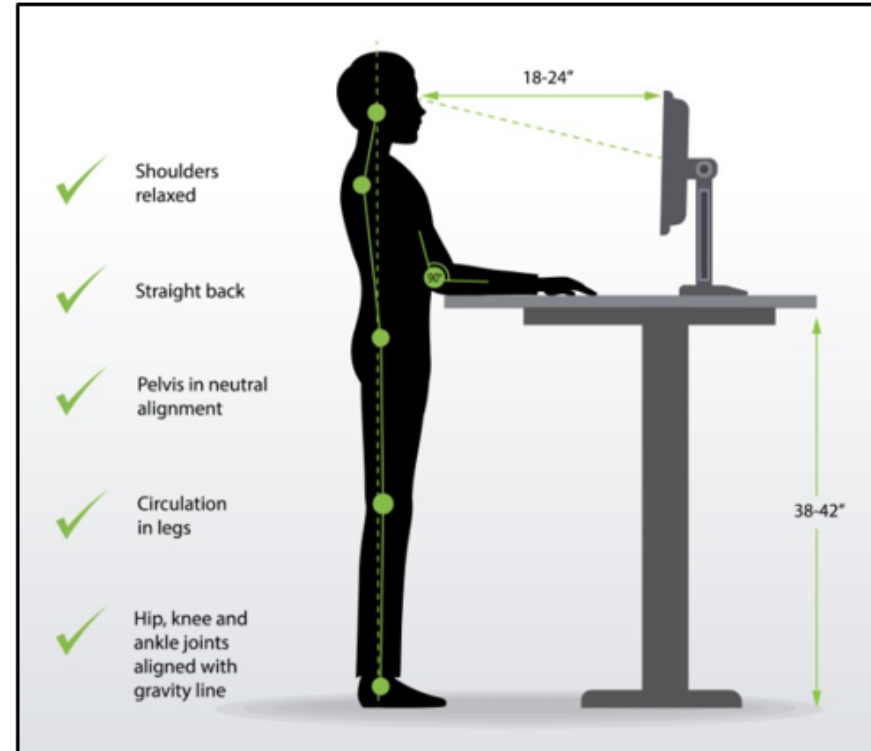
Awkward posture of the arms

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Employee Side Profile, After Changes



Ideal Neutral Standing Position



Adjustments to Neutral:

Wear shoes for better support.

Put laptop and/or keyboard on a box to change monitor height

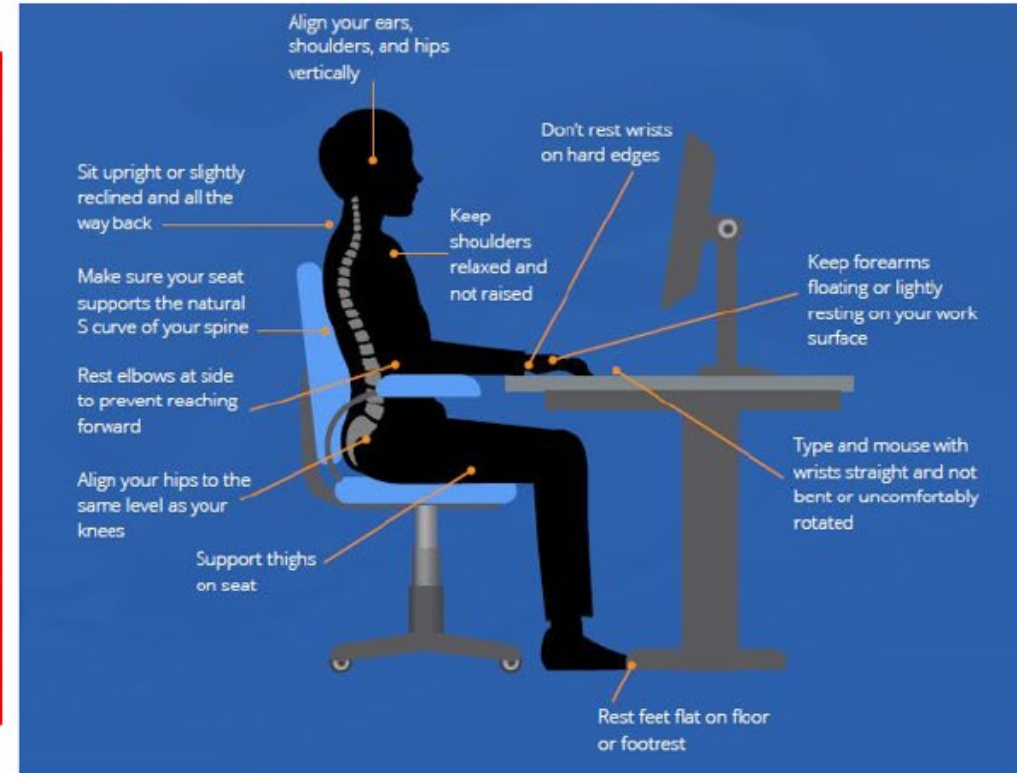
Connect keyboard and mouse to laptop to promote neutral wrist and arm positions

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Employee Side Profile, **Before** Changes



Ideal Neutral Seated Position



Ergonomic Risk Factors Identified:

Awkward Posture of the neck to get eyes to screen

Arm angle greater than 90-100-degree angle

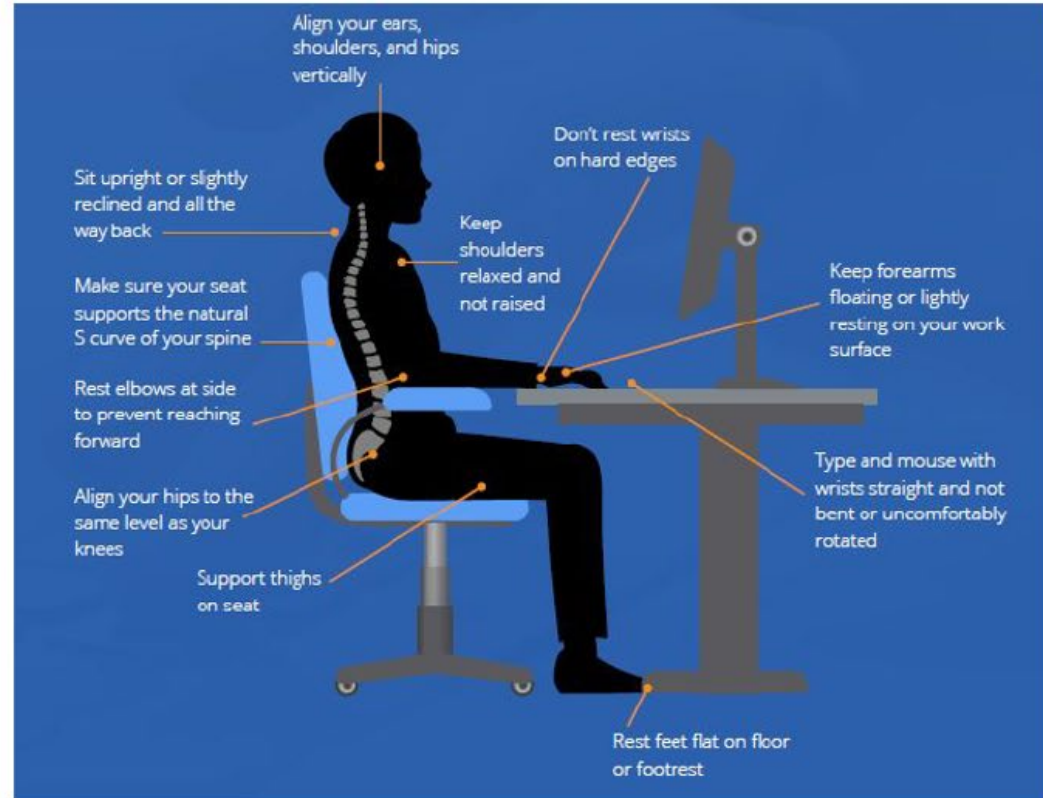
Leg angle greater than 90-100-degree angle

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Employee Side Profile, After Changes



Ideal Neutral Seated Position



Adjustments to Neutral:

Add a cushion or pillow behind your back to create a more neutral S-curve of the spine

Use a TV tray or card table for your computer/keyboard to promote a more neutral wrist and arm position

Put laptop on a box to improve neck alignment

Have feet flat on ground to improve circulation

Additional Tips

- Use boxes and books elevate the laptop to eye level
- Cushions, towels, and pillows provide additional support and raise you to proper seating height
- Use boxes, cushions, or reams of paper as a footrest to support your feet
- Avoid talking on the phone with the phone between the neck and ear. Use speakerphone.
- Keep the weight of your head directly above its base of support (neck)

