

# Fitting your workspace for optimal health and well-being

Selecting products that support comfort in the workspace is a proactive first step towards maintaining workers' optimal health, ensuring ability to produce quality work. This article will discuss some causes of and potential solutions to address neck pain and wrist pain, two frequent health issues in the workplace.

## What may be causing neck pain and what are the solutions?

Cause #1: A monitor too low or too high

The head is quite heavy, and moving it away from a neutral position can be stressful on neck muscles. Research shows that when the head is tilted away from a vertical position, neck fatigue increases rapidly and can result in pain (Nejati, Lotfian, Moezy, & Nejati, 2015).

**Solution:** The top of your monitor or reading material should be at eye level. When using multiple monitors, identify where you tend to look the most and position this monitor to allow for a neutral neck posture.

Cause #2: A monitor/document holder too far from the user

Inappropriate viewing distance and placement of materials being read can increase fatigue and stress on the eyes. Postural changes can also then result, such as leaning toward the screen or document.

**Solution:** The more upright the head and trunk are, the less muscle activity and neck strength are required to maintain the posture. The distance to your monitor/reading material should be approximately the length of your arms reaching forward (from your normal sitting posture).

The 3M™ Dual Monitor Arm enables users to easily move their monitors into a comfortable position. The height-adjustable arm moves smoothly up and down with just a touch and swivels 180 degrees making it easy to move out of the way when not in use, or when sharing the screen with others. It also tilts

forward and back for optimal ergonomic positioning. The Dual Monitor Arm allows you to experience the productivity benefits of two displays by mounting a second LCD display, notebook or tablet.



## What may be causing wrist pain and what are the solutions?

Cause #1: Improper wrist position with ulnar deviation

Ulnar deviation creates static loading conditions in the muscles that cross the wrist. This posture decreases the amount of space and increases the pressure in the carpal tunnel, resulting in increased potential for discomfort and pain (Baker & Moehling, 2013).

**Solution:** Minimizing any prolonged posture by stretching the wrists throughout the day, using a split keyboard and/or regularly alternating hands when using your mouse will minimize repetitive strain.

Cause #2: Improper wrist position with wrist extension

Prolonged wrist extension creates static loading conditions in the muscles that cross the wrist. This posture decreases the amount of space and increases the pressure in the carpal tunnel, resulting in increased potential for discomfort and pain.

**Solution:** Your wrists should be in a neutral position while typing, which means that your mouse and keyboard should allow for this position during use. If your keyboard is on an angle, try to make it flat (put away the legs on the back of the keyboard). Palm pads can be used, but ensure these pads are under the palms rather than the wrist.

The 3M™ Adjustable Keyboard Tray (model AKT150LE) includes a highly adjustable platform that allows for left and right lateral adjustments. It also has an articulating mouse platform that adjusts up, down, left, right, forward and back and tilts forward and back too.

3M™ is dedicated to help create the work environment you need. Visit our website to learn about what innovative solutions 3M™ offers to make your workspace more comfortable and productive: [www.3m.ca/ergo](http://www.3m.ca/ergo). To view CAOT Product Recognition Reports for 3M™ products, go to: [www.caot.ca/productrecognition](http://www.caot.ca/productrecognition).



## References

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