

Desk Problems and Solutions

Desk Hazard 1 – Lower Back Pain

Causes

- Long hours in a chair
- Muscle fatigue
- Slouching and poor posture

Solution

- Going for a walk
- At your desk exercises
- Improving work station comfort with lumbar support or foot stools
- Improving posture regular core and back exercises.

Causes

- Overuse or poor wrist positioning
- Repetitive strain
- Inflammation

Solution

- Specific wrist stretches
- Wrist rests
- Regular breaks from using the mouse and keyboard

Desk Hazard 2 – Wrist Pain

Desk Hazard 3 – Neck and Shoulder Pain

Causes

- Work station not set up correctly
- Long hours on the phone resting on your shoulder.

Solution

- Regular neck and shoulder exercises at the desk
- Specialist treatment with physiotherapist or chiropractor
- Positioning computer screen directly in front of the chair at the correct height
- Positioning the keyboard directly in front of the chair with space for the wrist to rest and be supported
- If frequently on the phone use a headset

Causes

- Long hours staring at the screen
- Monitors too far away or too close
- Dry eyes

Solution

- Having the screen correctly placed
- Use anti-glare filters
- Regular checks with your optometrist
- Give your eyes a break from the screens, such as after 20-30 minutes of working at an Electronic Display looking briefly at something in the distance or getting up to chat to a co-worker or going to the print

Desk Hazard 4 – Eye Strain

Work Related Stress

We expect a certain level of stress and pressure in life and at work. Stress and pressure can help to create a positive 'buzz' and motivation to complete jobs.

However, a slow or rapid build of excessive pressure can create negative stresses and lead to problems physically and emotionally, generating ill health, low morale, loss of productivity and ultimately costing the company both fiscally and in valuable employees.

According to the HSE, work related stress is the second most commonly reported cause of illness in the United Kingdom

In the year 2015/2016 there were 488 000 reported cases, with 224 000 reports being new. On average 23.9 working days were lost per case.

Symptoms:

Stress, anxiety, depression, behaviour and personality changes, loss of productivity

Effect:

Over 11 million working days lost each year (HSE, 2018)

Main factors:

- Work load pressure
- Tight deadlines
- Too much pressure
- Too much responsibility
- Organisational changes
- Violence or bullying at work
- Role uncertainty

Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires both employers and self employed persons to evaluate the risk from hazards in their working environments. It is expected that business and companies take reasonable measures to reduce, prevent or manage these risks. These hazards include the work station, manual handling and mental stress.

Carrying out appropriate risk assessments can help to show whether existing control measures are working or if more is needed.

Solutions:

Risk assessments with proactive and reactive strategies

Staff Health and Wellbeing programmes including mindfulness, exercise and massage.

If you need help or if your worried about someone else, please see details of services and organisations that offer specialist help:

| Samaritans: 116 123 | Mind: 0300 123 3393, info@mind.org.uk, or text: 86463 |
| Talk to your GP or if urgent help is needed call 999 |