

## Office Ergonomics Tips

### Safe Sitting Posture:

- Feet should be flat on the floor or supported with a footrest.
- Hips and knees are positioned at approximately a 90-degree angle or just slightly greater. Thighs should be parallel to the floor.
- There should be 2-3 fingers of clearance from the chair's seat pan to the back of your knees.
- Head is aligned with the spine. Ears, shoulders and hips are aligned.
- The back of the chair should be supporting the low and mid back. Lumbar support should be engaged to encourage the natural inward curvature of the lumbar spine.
- The back of the chair should support you sitting upright while allowing you to sit back and feel supported by the chair's backrest.
- Shoulders are back and relaxed. They should not be lifted or dropped.
- Elbows are positioned around a 90-degree angle, close to the trunk. Elbows are supported by armrests or the desk surface.

### Keyboard:

- Keyboard should be positioned at elbow height, or slightly below, when your elbows are at a 90-degree angle. Wrists should be straight with your hands in line with your forearms.
- To accommodate the appropriate typing height, you may need to adjust the height of your chair and support your feet with a footrest.

### Monitor:

- Monitor should be positioned so your eyes line up with the top 25% (1-3") of the monitor.
- Monitor should be an arm's length away for a comfortable reading distance.
- If using multiple monitors, try to pick a primary screen to sit in front of, or position yourself between the two monitors. Avoid twisting. Rotate your full body using your chair to face the monitor you are viewing. Your face and feet should always be pointing in the same direction.
- If there is a discrepancy in monitor sizes, ensure the bottom of the monitors are aligned. Use a monitor riser or another item that appropriately supports the monitor.
- If you wear bifocals, the monitor should be positioned lower. Aim for your eyes to line with the monitor mid-screen or tilt the monitor back 30-45 degrees.

### Further Support:

- To learn more about adjusting your workstation, complete the "[Office Ergonomics](#)" online training.
- If you need further assistance with reviewing your workstation, discuss it with your manager.
- The Provincial MSIP Team completes ergonomic assessments. An [Ergonomic Assessment Referral Form](#) is available on the Health PEI Staff Resource Centre.
- Please send all completed and signed Ergonomic Assessment Referral Forms to **MSIPergonomics@ihis.org**

## CHAIRS

### ***What chair features offer ergonomic support?***

The more adjustability a chair has, the more ergonomic support it can provide. Fully adjustable office chairs are recommended for users who are seated for extended periods during their shift to ensure they are supported and to decrease risk of injury. If there is a lever on the back of the chair, this engages lumbar support, and often means it is a fully adjustable chair. Most times this can be set up improperly (with the lever pointing to the ceiling) and needs to be turned on to allow for lumbar support. At times, someone may not find their chair comfortable, but the lumbar support is turned off. Once it is engaged and in the correct position, the user often notices a big improvement.

### ***How to adjust a chair properly?***

- If you share a chair with others, it is important to take the time to adjust the chair to meet your needs when you use it.
- Adjust the backrest height so that the backrest's lumbar support lines up with the small of the back.
- Adjust the lumbar support (as desired) to support the small of the back.
- Ensure the correct seat depth. There should be approximately two fingers between the back of the knees and the chair. Shorten or lengthen the seat pan, as needed.
- Adjust the seat height to allow for the elbows to be at a 90-degree angle when typing. If feet are dangling or perching on the chair's base because the chair is too high, a footrest may be needed (more below).
- Other adjustments can be made such as tilts, arm rest angles, etc., as needed.
- Refer to this video for a demonstration of how to adjust a fully adjustable office chair:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEB\\_yBM9zP8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEB_yBM9zP8)

### ***What office chairs are recommended by the MSIP team?***

The [obsforume comfort](#) is a fully adjustable office chair Health PEI has on contract. This chair has the following adjustable features: lumbar support (optional), seat depth, seat height, seat angle, back rest, and arm rests.

- Three seat sizes are available (18" wide, 20.8" wide and 24" wide).
- Two backrest heights are available.



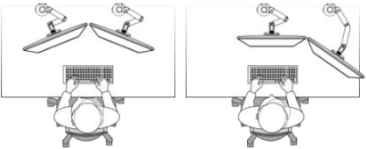
The [tritek ergo select](#) is a fully adjustable office chair also on the Health PEI contract. This chair has the following adjustable features: lumbar support (standard), seat depth, seat height, seat angle, back rest, and arm rests.

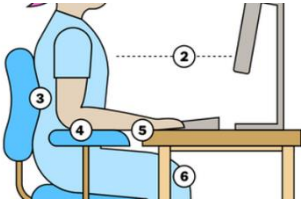


- Three seat sizes are available (16.7" wide, 19.5" wide and 20.8" wide).
- Three backrest heights are available.



### ***How is the appropriate chair seat size and backrest height determined?***

- To determine the appropriate chair seat size, the user's hip width is measured.
- The height of the backrest should allow for the top of the backrest to be in line with the top of the user's shoulders, when the lumbar support is positioned correctly in line with the small of the back.

MONITORS		
Eye Position	Screens	Other
<p>Eyes should be 1-3" below the top of your monitor frame while seated at a comfortable posture and looking straight ahead.</p> <p><b>Bifocals:</b> If someone wears bifocals, they often must tilt their neck into extension to see the screen. Therefore, if someone has bifocals, the monitor should be positioned lower. Aim for their eyes to be mid-screen when looking straight ahead in a comfortable posture. It is important to prevent neck extension. Another option is to tilt the screen back (30-45 degrees).</p>	<p><b>Equally using two monitors:</b> Position yourself directly in the middle of the two monitors.</p> <p><b>One primary monitor:</b> Position yourself directly in front of the primary monitor and place the secondary monitor off to the side. Turn in the chair to fully rotate your body to look at the second monitor, rather than twisting through the neck.</p> 	<p><b>Monitor distance:</b> For a 24" – 27" monitor, it is recommended to be 20 "– 30" away from the screen. An arm's length away is usually a good guide.</p> <p><b>Eye strain:</b> If experiencing eye strain, check the brightness on the monitor. The brightness should be set between 90-100%. Display settings can also be adjusted to a "warm light" (night mode) or changing the theme in your display settings to "dark mode" to reduce brightness.</p>

KEYBOARD & MOUSE	
Keyboard	Mouse
<p><b>Location:</b> The keyboard should be in a position where the user can comfortably work at approximately a 90-degree angle from shoulder, elbow, to wrist.</p>  <p><b>Kickstands:</b> For most users, it is appropriate to turn the keyboard kickstands off. When they are up, it promotes wrist extension rather than a neutral position.</p> <p><b>External number pads:</b> Can be placed on the left side of keyboard. They can help reduce repetitive movements when doing data entry or frequent calculations.</p> <p><b>Compact Keyboard:</b> Number pads are typically located on the right side of the keyboard. A compact or mini keyboard does not have a number pad and allows the mouse to sit closer to midline. This can allow the elbow to be closer to the trunk and stabilizes the shoulder.</p>	<p><b>Location:</b> The mouse should be placed right next to the keyboard. It is important that the mouse and the keyboard are at the same height.</p> <p><b>Mouse closer to midline:</b> If the user likes/tolerates a touchpad, an option is the <b>rollermouse pro 3</b>. This will connect to a standard keyboard and mousing is completed using a roll bar. This may benefit users who find using a standard mouse causes discomfort.</p>  <p><b>Neutral wrist position mouse:</b> A neutral grip mouse can alleviate wrist/elbow pain during mouse use. It promotes natural extension and flexion movements at the wrist instead of limited ulnar and radial deviation. Wired, wireless and left-hand mice are available.</p> 

*Other: If the desk is not deep enough, then a keyboard tray may be needed. Ideally, the tray can be moved in and out, up and down and is angle adjustable.*

## HEIGHT ADJUSTABLE DESKS

When assessing work areas, the MSIP team tries to recommend equipment that is adjustable to allow it to be suitable for different users. Typically, a manager may request a height adjustable desk for their department, or there may be a clinical reason why someone may need one when the MSIP team assesses for one.

### **What is the best option?**

The powered height adjustable sit-stand desk is the best option. A 30" depth is typically recommended to allow adequate space for the keyboard to go on the desk and therefore there is no need for a keyboard tray. Rectangular sit-stand desks come in various lengths (60", 66", etc.). There are also options for L-shaped sit-stand desks. Typically, they are 30" depth on one side and 24" depth on the other. The lengths of each side can vary.



VariDesks that sit on top of the workstation, and are manually adjusted by the user between sitting and standing heights, may be appropriate for some situations. An ergonomic assessment is recommended to determine if it is appropriate for the user and their work environment.



### **How do I adjust a sit-stand desk?**

Adjust the desk so that there is a 90-degree angle at the elbows in both sitting and standing positions, with the shoulders relaxed. The seated and standing heights can be programmed into the desk's memory by holding down "S" and then pressing either "1", "2", "3" or "4" to facilitate adjusting the desk. Always ensure there is nothing under or above the desk that will come in contact with the desk prior to adjusting the height of the desk.

### **Sit-Stand Desk Accessories:**

- A **footrest** can help to offload pressure in standing (more information on footrests below).
- An **anti-fatigue mat** is recommended to stand on when working in standing, as it offers cushioning to your joints. It is also important to wear supportive footwear when working in standing.
- A **height adjustable monitor arm** that the monitor mounts to can facilitate monitor height adjustment when altering between sitting and standing positions.

## FOOTRESTS

### **What style of footrest is recommended?**

The Fellows adjustable footrest with the lock feature is one the MSIP team commonly recommends.

### **What is a footrest used for when sitting?**

- If an employee's feet are dangling or perching on the chair's base, it helps improve positioning and supports the feet.
- If the keyboard is moved from a keyboard tray onto the desk and the chair height is raised to accommodate the raised typing height.
- It can also take force off the hips and low back and cue better seated positioning.



### **What is a footrest used for when standing?**

- This can help offload pressure in standing, by resting one foot on the footrest (and alternate).