



Workstation Ergonomics

With living in an information age, it comes as no surprise that the majority of employees sit at a desk in front of a computer each day. While computer technology may be great for increasing productivity, it can also wreak havoc on human health. Because of this fact, it is important to make modifications and upgrades to existing workstations. Moreover, it's essential that you provide your employees with specific instruction on how they can be more ergonomically efficient during the workday.

The entire process can start with a workstation assessment. By conducting workstation assessments, both the employer and the employee will gain a better understanding of the individual's working environment. Specifically, workstation assessments are performed by professionals who have been trained in the field, and they generally begin with a checklist-type of overview examining things such as computer monitor height, keyboard and mouse position, chair mechanics and lighting. At the completion of the assessment, the employee and the employer are given helpful recommendations on how to improve each workstation within the organization.

It is also recommended that employers closely monitor the facility's heating, lighting and ventilation systems as it is not uncommon for employees to experience significant health issues when these systems are not closely monitored. Health issues such as allergy flare ups and sinus congestion can easily be lessened when close attention is paid to the ventilation system.

In addition to conducting workstation assessments and monitoring the physical working environment, it is recommended that employers provide employees with information on ergonomic issues, especially as it relates to identifying musculoskeletal concerns, such as back pain and wrist/hand discomfort. Stretching programs help defer some of the discomfort and even a well-checked ergonomic workstation may cause your employee problems.

Pay special attention if you have an aging workforce. Computer screen size, keyboard, chair style and phone style can all be easily adjusted to make sure your employee is comfortable and productive at work.

For more information on workstation ergonomics, contact Sharon Rateike, corporate wellness program coordinator at (920) 568-5475 or Sharon.Rateike@forthc.com.

