

Pinnacol Pointers for Safety Group Programs

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Improve Ergonomics to Reduce Worker Strain Injuries

Office ergonomics affects workers in industries as diverse as construction, health care, manufacturing, retail and the public sector. It comes into play whenever soft-tissue strain results from improper or repetitive body movements, as well as lack of motion.

What to Do

Working over long periods of time in awkward postures without taking breaks can greatly increase your employees' risk for musculoskeletal injuries. Proper workstation setup and layout, good fit with a quality task chair and posture changes throughout the day are the most effective ways to reduce the risk of overuse injuries. Reorganizing work so employees can stand and walk every 30 to 45 minutes, for example, is a no-cost approach to reduce the effects of sitting in a static posture.

What Not to Do

Look for these common awkward postures at your employees' workstations and inform workers of these risk factors for injury:

- Working in a seated, static position for more than 30 minutes without standing or walking.
- Sitting so far forward in a chair that the back is unsupported or, worse, slouching forward over the keyboard.
- Working with elbows extended in front of the body, which creates muscle tension in the upper back.
- Cradling the phone for long periods while performing keyboard/mouse work.
- Entering data from a document that is face down on the desk, requiring awkward neck flexion or twisting.
- Placing contact stress on soft tissues, such as resting wrists on a hard, sharp desktop edge while using a computer mouse.

Pinnacol Resources

Pinnacol is here to inform policyholders and improve the ergonomic setup and layout of your computer workstations. Visit [Pinnacol's Resource webpage](#) to view our interactive office ergonomics video. A host of additional downloads – FAQs; guidelines for choosing an ergonomic chair and workstation setup, a stretching and warm-up exercise handout, and equipment procurement and use checklists – can help prevent musculoskeletal strains and injuries to your workers. You can order a computer DVD copy of the interactive video program from [Pinnacol's Order Materials webpage](#) under

the DVD Training & Resources section. Your organization can make copies of the DVD and distribute them to employees or even copy the files to your organization's intranet. You can also contact Pinnacol's Safety On Call hotline at 303-361-4700 or 888-501-4752. Our Safety Services team is committed to helping you keep your organization's employees healthy, productive and injury-free.

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