



Strategies to minimize computer related injuries

Moving to virtual school inevitably means more computer time for your child.

Here are some tips of things you can do in order to avoid some of the injuries that spending long hours behind a computer can cause.

Maintain a good posture

- Sit at an adjustable desk specially designed for use with computers.
- Have the computer monitor (screen) either at eye level or slightly lower.
- Have your keyboard at a height that lets your elbows rest comfortably at your sides. Your forearms should be roughly parallel with the floor and level with the keyboard.
- Adjust your chair so that your feet rest flat on the floor, or use a footstool.
- Use an ergonomic chair, specially designed to help your spine hold its natural curve while sitting.
- Use an ergonomic keyboard so that your hands and wrists are in a more natural position.
- Take frequent short breaks and go for a walk, or do stretching exercises at your desk. Stand often.

Care for your arm and hands

- Have your mouse at the same height as your correctly positioned keyboard.
- Position the mouse as close as possible to the side of the keyboard.
- Use your whole arm, not just your wrist, when using the mouse.
- Type lightly and gently.
- Mix your tasks to avoid long, uninterrupted stretches of using the computer.
- Remove your hands from the keyboard when not actively typing, to let your arms relax.

Prevent eyestrain

- Make sure your main source of light (such as a window) is not shining into your face or directly onto the computer screen.
- Tilt the screen slightly to avoid reflections or glare. Make sure the screen is not too close to your face. Put the screen either at eye level or slightly lower. Reduce the contrast and brightness of your screen by adjusting the controls.
- Frequently look away from the screen and focus on faraway objects.

When using a laptop

- Use a correctly set-up desktop computer instead of a laptop as often as you can.
- Use peripheral equipment, such as a docking station, separate keyboard, mouse and laptop stand. Take frequent breaks.

Young users

- Take frequent breaks
- Set up the computer, desk, chair and keyboard to suit your child's height. For example, adjust the chair so that your child's feet rest flat on the floor
- Buy an ergonomic chair
- Buy a smaller mouse, which suits the size of your child's hand
- Teach your child to use the keyboard and mouse properly and safely, such as pushing the buttons and other controls gently. Using unnecessary force increases the risk of overuse injury.