UCSB Ergonomics Program

Stretching Exercises

To help maintain good posture, increase flexibility, and avoid injury at work.

Neutral Position
Ears over shoulders, shoulders over hips, hips over knees, knees over ankles

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Hold each stretch for approximately 5 seconds.
NEVER FORCE A STRETCH
If you feel pain, STOP, ease off of stretch.

### Head
- Chin to chest
- Head up and back
- Ear to shoulder (both sides)
- Turn to look over shoulder (both sides)
- Pull chin straight back – keep chin level with floor

### Shoulders
- Neutral position
- Shrug shoulders up around neck
- Shoulder circles BACKWARDS, one at a time, and then both
- Door jam stretch (repeat other side)
- Squeeze shoulder blades together without moving arms

### Hands/Wrists
- Rotate hands in both directions
- Drop hands down and back
- Open and close fingers
- Pull fingers back and down on each hand

### Hands/Forearms/Neck
- Turn arm inward
- Bend wrist (palm to the sky)
- Raise arm to the side
- Tilt head to the opposite side

### Upper Back
- Stand with one foot slightly in front of the other – soften knees – ease away from secure object
FOR EACH STANDING EXERCISE
Stand with feet shoulder width apart, knees soft (slightly bent)

Lower Back

Sitting option
Sitting in a chair – make sure the chair is secure against something so that it does not move – sit on edge of chair – extend right leg out in front of body with toe pointing toward ceiling – ease forward from hip joint – spine neutral – hold – repeat other side

Standing option

Sitting in a chair, place ankle on knee – ease forward from hip joint – keep spine in neutral position – repeat other side

Sitting, hold your upper leg just above and behind the knee … gently pull knee toward chest – repeat other side

Carpal Tunnel/Tendonitis Prevention Exercises

Lift arm out in front to shoulder level, palm facing up – bend wrist until fingers point to the floor. Hold 5 sec.

Bring fingers and wrist up, forming a tight fist – flex wrist toward you – keep elbow straight. Hold 5 sec.

Bend elbow pulling fist toward the shoulder

Rotate arm out toward your side

Straighten elbow and fingers – bend wrist, pointing fingers toward the floor. Hold 5 sec. Repeat other hand

Balance

Start with toe on ground and lift leg – repeat on other leg

Feet

Point and flex feet, one at a time

Rotate feet, one at a time, in both directions
Relaxation Techniques

Deep Breathing
3 deep breaths performed slowly (inhale through nose and blow out through mouth) will help you to relax.

Walking
Take time daily to get out of your workspace and go for a 10-15 minute walk.

Frequent Questions & Answers

What is ergonomics?
Ergonomics is the science (and art) of fitting the work environment to the employee. By improving the match between the work environment and the employee, you can expect improved employee comfort, reduced chances for occupational injuries, improved productivity, and improved employee job satisfaction.

What are the risk factors associated with occupational injuries?
- Awkward Posture
- High Repetition
- Excessive Force
- Contact Stresses
- Vibration
- Extreme Temperatures

What are the steps to help prevent injuries?
- Identify the risk factors
- Determine potential solutions to reduce risk factors
- Implement the solution/s
- Follow-up to assure solution/s are successful and to re-evaluate for additional risk factors
Call Julie McAbee at x3283

Who are these exercises for?
These exercises are for everyone whether you work in an office, lab, classroom, or in the outside environment.

Is there a good exercise if my lower back is hurting?
Look in the "lower back section" and perform these 3 stretches 2 times per day.
Call Julie at x3283 if problem persists or you have any questions.

How often should I perform these exercises?
You should perform these exercises at least once per day, twice if you have time.

How often should I take a break?
Every 10-15 minutes. If you work in an office environment – stand up out of your chair.
If you work outside – try to change your activity or task.

Where do I get more information?
Contact Julie McAbee, Ergonomics Coordinator
for an ergonomic evaluation or to answer any questions you may have - 805.893.3283 or julie.mcabee@ehs.ucsb.edu
Or visit our website at http://ehs.ucsb.edu/