Fast Facts about Laptop Ergonomics

Improve your Laptop Workstation
- If you regularly use a laptop, consider using a full-sized keyboard and mouse for improved hand and wrist comfort.
- For better viewing and neck posture, consider using either a notebook stand with adjustable height settings or a docking station and full-sized monitor.
- Set up the laptop keyboard so that elbows are level with or slightly higher than the keyboard.
- Position the keyboard close enough that you avoid forward reaching. Your elbows should remain at your side when using your laptop.
- If your laptop has a glide point that is difficult to move, consider plugging in an external mouse or try using key commands instead.
- To maximize neck comfort, position the top of the screen at eye level.

Improve your Laptop Habits
- If you must type from the laptop, avoid resting on the wrist rest areas or table while typing. Practice “floating your hands” while typing and mousing.
- Schedule mini-breaks every 20 to 30 minutes to avoid soft tissue strain that is common with repetition and static postures.
- Stand up and stretch every hour to revive tired, sore muscles.
- Select a good, supportive chair. Be sure your feet are supported by the floor or a footrest. Position your chair height so that your hips are slightly higher than your knees.
- If you are sitting in a side chair or couch, use pillows to support your arms while keying.
- Avoid bending your neck and head forward to see the screen. Your hands and wrists should be kept in a straight, neutral posture when typing.

Using Laptops “On the Go”
Don’t forget ergonomics when traveling. If you are in a hotel, conference room, or other facility, try the following:
- Use a pillow or pad to raise your chair high enough so that your elbows are level or slightly higher than the keyboard.
- Ask the hotel or conference center if they have a docking station for laptops. If not, ask if there are computer workstations for desktops and plug into their keyboard and monitor.
- If the work surface isn’t low enough (or the chair isn’t high enough), then your lap is always an option. Use pads or pillows to position it to the appropriate height.
- If placing your laptop on your lap, sit with your hips and knees level to allow the laptop to rest comfortably on your lap.
- Bending your neck forward to view the screen can cause strain and fatigue to the neck and shoulder area. Angle your screen upward to improve viewing and neck posture.
- Consider using a laptop pad to improve the height of your screen and keyboard.
- Use a chair without armrests to provide room to move your arms.
- To carry your laptop, use a backpack with padded shoulder straps or use a rolling bag.
- Consider the weight of the laptop when making the purchase.