MOUSE USE

Reaching for the mouse can result in increased stress to the shoulder/neck and severe deviation of the wrist. When the wrist fixates on the table or mouse pad, movement of the mouse occurs through deviation at the wrist or excessive reaching with the fingers. Use the following tips to prevent stress.

While Using the Mouse

- Position the mouse next to and at the same level as the keyboard to allow more neutral shoulder, upper arm, and wrist positions (movement of mouse can be accomplished through small shoulder movements instead of excessive movements of the wrist or fingers)
- Reduce grip and hold the mouse lightly to reduce stress to the hand
- Relax hand and let go of the mouse when it is not being used

Use Alternative Input Devices

- Manufacturers are creating an ever increasing number of alternative input devices (mouse, track ball, input pens) faster than ergonomic impact studies can evaluate them, so use good judgment as a consumer of any ergonomic product
- If possible, try the product before ordering it
- The track ball may be a more comfortable alternative to a mouse, but reaching for a track ball creates the same shoulder/neck stresses as reaching for a mouse (should also be positioned next to and at the same level as the keyboard)
- Keyboards with built-in trackballs are popular solutions to eliminating the problem of reaching, also useful in workstations that are not designed to accommodate a mouse

Frequent Breaks

- The body was not meant to stay in one position for an extended period of time or to perform the same task repeatedly, stand and move about the office for several minutes at least every hour
- If time is a factor, standing while continuing to read or think is helpful
- Finding an answer or solution to a tough problem will occur outside the office very often, using break time to walk outside around the building may be more productive

Visit [www.ehs.ucr.edu](http://www.ehs.ucr.edu) for additional information or call EH&S at 827-5528 if you have any questions.