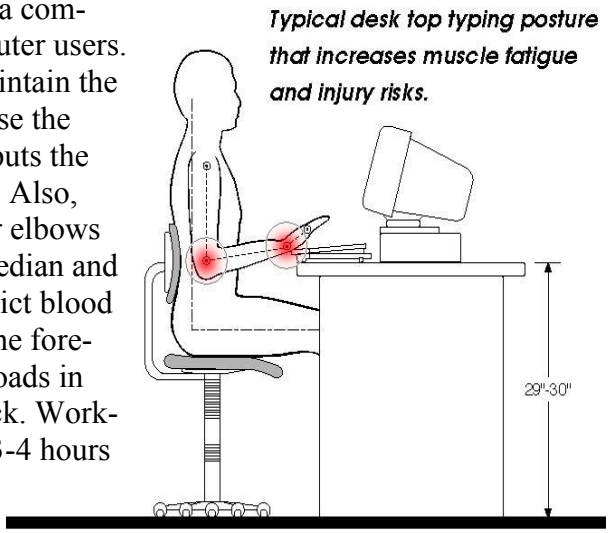
NCVDLS Quarterly Safety News

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

HEALTHY COMPUTING

Many of us spend a great deal of time at our computers, either at work or at home—therefore it is important that we make ourselves comfortable. The key to comfort is to put ourselves in a relaxed or "neutral" posture. The following website has some simple tips for best arranging your workstation (Ctrl + left click to open link): http://www.healthycomputing.com/tour/index.html

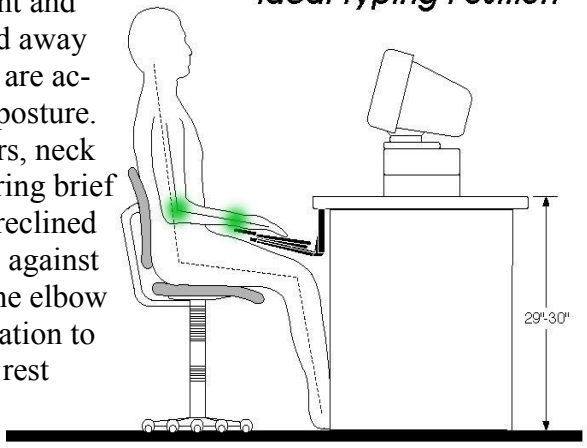
Typing at a keyboard on a desk is a common work posture for many computer users. In this position it is difficult to maintain the wrist is in a neutral posture, because the forearms sag as they tire and this puts the wrists into greater wrist extension. Also, most users have to work with their elbows flexed, which can compress the median and ulnar nerves at the elbow and restrict blood flow to the hands. Working with the forearms sloping up increase muscle loads in the upper arms, shoulders, and neck. Working in this position for more than 3-4 hours invariably leads to muscle fatigue.



Typical desk top typing posture that increases muscle fatigue and injury risks.

This posture is achieved when the keyboard is below seated elbow height and the keyboard base is gently sloped away from the user so that the key tops are accessible to the hands in a neutral posture. In this position the arms, shoulders, neck and back can relax, especially during brief rest pauses. Also, in this slightly reclined sitting position the low back rests against the lumbar support of the chair, the elbow angle is opened to promote circulation to the lower arm and hand. The feet rest firmly upon the floor.

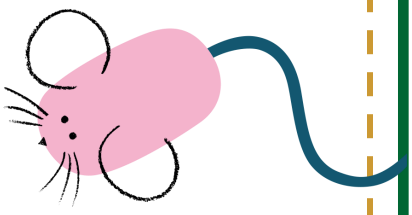
Ideal Typing Position



BE ALERT TO SIGNS OF DISCOMFORT

If at any time during or after computer use you feel pain, weakness, numbness, or tingling in your hands, wrists, elbows, shoulders, neck, or back, or if you have any reason to believe that you might be experiencing discomfort as a result of typing or from use of the mouse, you should contact your supervisor or Safety Officer to arrange an ergonomic assessment.

Safe Mousing Explained



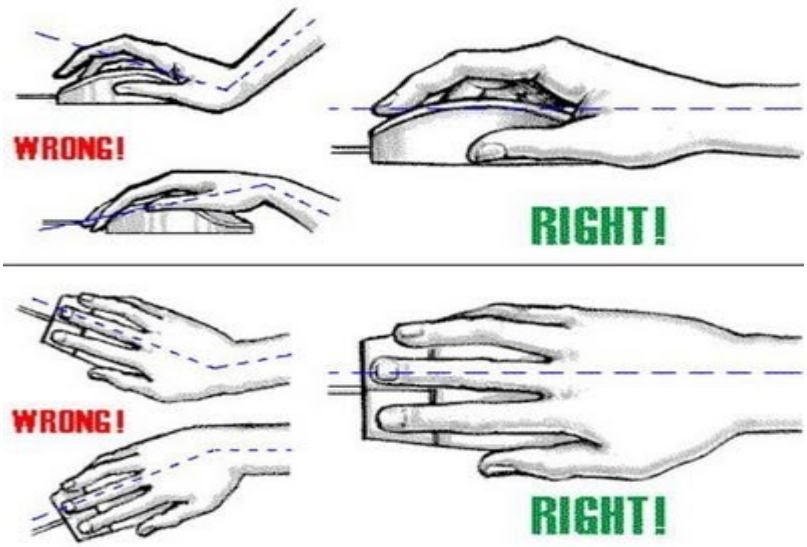
The computer mouse may seem rather benign. However, data suggests that the computer mouse is associated with a number of upper extremity injuries. Many of these injuries can be avoided by following some simple tips:

- ⇒ **Keep it close. The mouse should be positioned within close reach. Avoid having to extend when using your mouse.**
- ⇒ **Don't use a wrist rest. Studies have shown that a wrist rest restricts circulation and increases pressure on the carpel tunnel .**
- ⇒ **Try to keep your wrist flat and straight (see below).**

Keep it close!

Don't use a wrist rest!

Keep your wrist flat & straight!



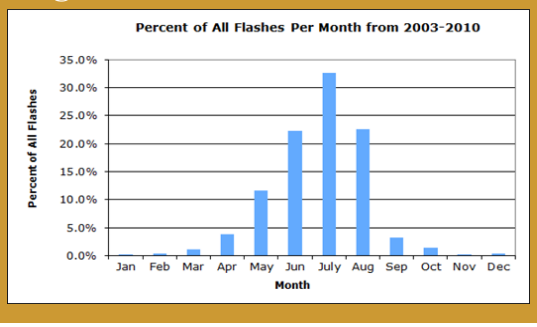
PPE SELECTION GUIDE (NCVDLS-R-SAFE-SOP-0151)

	IF YOUR TASK INVOLVES	USE THE FOLLOWING PPE
Chemical	Solids of low/moderate toxicity	Disposable gloves Lab coat
	Small amounts (<100 mL) of liquids with acute or chronic toxicity	Safety glasses or goggles Chemical resistant gloves Lab coat
	Moderate amounts (>100 mL) of liquids with acute or chronic toxicity (pure chemicals, mixtures, solutions)	Safety glasses or goggles Chemical resistant gloves Lab coat Acid-resistant apron & faceshield if more than 4 liters of highly corrosive chemicals are used Consider flame resistant lab coat if more than 4 liters of flammable liquids are used
	Liquid nitrogen	Safety glasses or goggles Face shield required if handling cryovials stored in liquid phase Insulated cryogenic gloves Lab coat
	Particularly hazardous/highly toxic chemicals	Safety glasses or goggles Chemical resistant gloves Lab coat Inside chemical fume hood
Biological	BL1 microorganisms/ materials	Disposable gloves Lab coat
	BL2 microorganisms/ materials	Disposable gloves Lab coat Safety glasses/goggles/face shield (splash is possible)
	BL3 microorganisms/ materials	Disposable gloves Lab coat Disposable coveralls PAPR (if outside of BSC)
Other Hazards	Handling hot objects such as autoclaved materials and heated glassware	Heat resistant gloves Lab coat (Possibly face shield)

LIGHTNING SAFETY FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

North Carolina is recognized as a leader when it comes to agriculture, furniture, high-tech industry development and many other desirable attributes.

Unfortunately our state is also a leader when it comes to lightning strikes. In fact out of all 50 states, NC ranks 4th when it comes to lightning related injuries and deaths. As the chart bellow shows, lightning strikes in NC are most common in spring and summer months.



All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous. Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain and may strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall. Many lightning deaths occur ahead of storms or after storms have seemingly passed. Keep this simple fact in mind: if you can hear thunder, you are in danger. <u>The following lightning safety tips could one day save your life:</u>

- ⇒ NO PLACE outside is safe when thunderstorms are in the area! • If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you. • When you hear thunder, immediately move to safe shelter . A safe shelter is an enclosed substantial building.
- ⇒ A vehicle provides good protection. Be sure the windows are up.
- ⇒ If caught outdoors , get off elevated hills or ridges. Do not shelter under an isolated tree. Stay away from objects that conduct electricity such as metal fences, power lines, etc.