Looking After Your Students

- Make sure that your class takes a few moments every 20 minutes to stop what they’re doing, stand up and stretch to restore circulation, relieve tense muscles, and break up periods of inactivity.

- Be on the lookout for signs of computer related injury in students. Warning signs include pain, tingling or heaviness in the neck, shoulders, back, arms, elbows, wrists or hands.

- Vary tasks
  Set diverse types of work to avoid students experiencing long periods of repetitive movements and stressful postures. Take micropauses.

  Students generally type in bursts rather than steadily. Between bursts, students should relax their hands, resting them straight and flat.

- Use shortcuts
  Encourage students to use keystrokes rather than the repetitive action of using the mouse, trackpad or joystick, which puts strain on hands and wrists.

- Set an example
  You don’t have to say ‘sit up straight’ – in so many words. Encourage students to sit tall with back straight, head straight, shoulders relaxed and both feet flat on the ground. Discourage crossed legs. Sitting correctly, there should be a curve in the small of the back.

Technology is evolving rapidly but we are not, we need to prevent injuries by being mindful of our working postures and avoiding sedentary lifestyles.

Testimonials

I had neck pain for several years on and off. I had physio at another clinic which helped for a while but then it came back. With Sarah she gave me tips on how to prevent the problem and gave me exercises I could do at home to help improve things more quickly. I now know how to avoid getting the symptoms in the first place - prevention is better than cure after all!

Emma, Deal

Have had ongoing neck problems following sporting injuries. Found Sarah friendly, professional and helpful. Exercises prescribed have made a huge difference to me, meaning I can take part in my usual sporting activities.

Tony, Broadstairs

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United Health’s Top Tips for Teachers

Avoid sitting on primary school furniture or stooping to meet the child’s eye level. Instead, lower your own chair. There are many chairs that are designed with teachers in mind.

When you are working at your desk with your computer, make sure that you have set your chair so that it can support you correctly.

If you need to carry heavy paperwork, use a trolley briefcase or a backpack with two well-padded straps.

Never work with your laptop flat on the desk. Raise it with a laptop stand so that the top of the screen is at eye level.

Use with a separate mouse and keyboard. This prevents you from bending your neck and overreaching to type.

Wear supportive and comfortable shoes.

Think about how you can change your posture when teaching e.g. use a perch stool or sit when presenting.

Wellbeing At Work

- Have a walking meeting.
- Snack well, avoiding processed sugary foods.
- Take regular short breaks to move.

The top work activities teachers associated with musculoskeletal disorders were:

- Bending over low tables.
- Sitting on children’s chairs.
- Kneeling at low tables/on the floor.
- Standing too long when teaching.

Every place of work should provide ergonomic surroundings...

A school is a place of work!