

Use of Computers (DSE)

Display screen equipment (DSE) is widely used throughout the workplace, usually in the form of computer equipment. It can be associated with neck, shoulder, back or arm pain (musculoskeletal disorders) as well as fatigue or eye strain –Long spells of DSE work can lead to tired eyes and discomfort. You and your employer can help ease the problems by ensuring the DSE is well positioned and properly adjusted and that the lighting is correct.

In order to avoid pain and fatigue whilst operating DSE the following steps should be followed.

- Adjust your chair and DSE equipment to find the most comfortable position for the task. As a broad guide your forearms should be approximately horizontal and your eye the same height as the top of the screen.
- Try different arrangements of the keyboard, screen and mouse to find the best arrangement for you.
- Arrange your equipment to avoid glare on the screen. To achieve this you or the screen should be directly facing windows or bright lights. Adjust the window dressings to prevent unwanted light.
- Make sure there is space under the desk to move your legs freely, avoid excess pressure on the backs of your legs and knees by using a footrest if necessary
- Adjust your keyboard to get a good keying position, ensuring there is space in front of the keyboard to rest the wrists and arms
- Position the mouse within easy reach so it can be used with a straight wrist. Sit upright, close to the desk so as not to stretch your mouse arm. Move the keyboard out of the way when not in use.

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- Make sure the screen is clean and the brightness and contrast are adjusted
- Don't stay in the same position for long periods at a time. Get up and move around or even just change your posture.
- Standing desks can now be purchased which adjust the height of the work station from seated to standing
- If you do suffer any symptoms of fatigue or muscle pain report it to your line manager

Questions

1. Do musculoskeletal disorders affect the eyes or the limbs
2. Should there be enough room for the forearms and wrists in front of the keyboard