

Ergonomics

Introduction

Work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) can result when there is a mismatch between the physical capacity of workers and their equipment and the physical demands of their job. Ergonomics can provide a solution to many of these injuries.

George Washington University strives to improve the comfort and well-being of employees by identifying and correcting ergonomic risk factors in the workplace. The university's Ergonomic Program was developed to effectively identify and prevent work-related musculoskeletal disorders through engineering, equipment, proper work practices, and administrative controls.

Who is Impacted

- Faculty
- Staff

Overview

Proper application of ergonomic principles can help to reduce the risk of injuries or illnesses for employees working with computers, in laboratories, or in jobs involving repetitive motions and handling of heavy materials.

The university's Ergonomic Program promotes employee health and comfort through training, consultation, and written recommendations.

The primary tools of the university's Ergonomic Program include training and information, and workstation evaluations and recommendations. Employees seeking information on ergonomics should contact Environmental Health & Safety to request an ergonomic assessment or more information.

Employees may request an in-person ergonomic assessment of their workstation by contacting Environmental Health & Safety: safety@gwu.edu. No evaluations will be performed without the knowledge of the employee's immediate supervisor.

The Ergonomic assessment contractor will provide written recommendations to the employee, as well as his or her supervisor, which will outline possible alterations to the workstation. The purpose of the evaluation and written report are to eliminate ergonomic problems that may lead to musculoskeletal

disorders, and to address MSDs already present. Only employees experiencing ergonomic difficulties should request an evaluation.

The written report provided by The Ergonomic assessment contractor may include but are not limited to suggested products, such as keyboard trays or ergonomically designed chairs. Purchasing suggested products is both the decision and responsibility of the evaluated employee's department.

The University's Ergonomic Program is currently under review and will be available from Environmental Health & Safety upon completion.

Definitions

Ergonomics: Fitting the workplace to the worker, and examining the interaction between the worker and his or her environment.

Musculoskeletal Disorder: A disorder of the muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, cartilage, blood vessels, or spinal discs, usually as a result of repetitive motion that places inordinate strain on the body.

Related Information

[OSHA: Ergonomics Guidelines](#)

Last Reviewed Date: Currently being reviewed