

## Work Place Ergonomics

All employees perform various tasks while working at Northwestern. Either sitting at a desk or moving about in different ways. How you sit or move can help or hurt your productivity. Ergonomics is the process of designing or arranging workplaces so they fit the people who use them. Ergonomics looks to improve workspaces and environments to minimize risk of injury or harm. For example, adjusting a workstation so a person sits comfortably and correctly to reduce physical stresses that can lead to discomfort and possible injury. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics says that ergonomic injuries account for one out of every three missing workdays. Their research also claims that employees take more time off work -- a median of 11 days -- from injuries caused by ergonomic problems than other injuries or illnesses. Good workplace ergonomic practices reduce physical stress on the body and help prevent long-term injuries and disabilities,

### Tips for Success When Talking to Your Team

**Preparation is Key:** Keep the topic relevant. Work with your team to review the various ways to improve ergonomics in your work place.

**Stay Positive:** Keep the focus on what can be done to create a safe workplace, instead of focusing on what has gone wrong in the past.

**Share a Story, Ask for a Story:** Storytelling is a powerful method to convey information. Stories from your employees make the topic even more relatable.

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### For Additional Information

Contact Gwen Butler, Director, Environmental Health & Safety, at 847.491.4936.

*Do you or your team have a safety story you'd like to share? Contact Risk Management at [gwen.butler@northwestern.edu](mailto:gwen.butler@northwestern.edu) for details.*