



Is your job a pain in the neck?

No, really, if you sit all day in front of a computer at work, your computer workstation may be the cause of your nagging neck and shoulder pain. And not surprising, said Dr. Vincent Fortanasce, a rehab specialist and author of *End Back & Neck Pain*, “The setup of your computer workstation can play a large factor in your ability to stay symptom free.” He and his coauthors point out 3 common workstation mistakes people make that lead to pain.

- **Overreaching** injuries occur because items on your desktop such as your keyboard or mouse, phone, documents, and other desk items are not on the same level surface. So you reach to grab that stapler or strain to pick up files.
The solution: rearrange the desktop, adjust your chair, put the keyboard and mouse on the same surface, put things you use the most closest to you.
- **Use of incorrect heights** refers to the up and down motions and placement of items. Incorrect height occurs as a result of the positioning of the chair, including the armrests, seat back, seat pan, desktop where work is placed, monitor, and the surface holding the keyboard and mouse. Incorrect height may also refer to furniture and features of the work area that are not adjustable.
The solution: a proper chair is of critical importance. Can you adjust it? Do you have to reach above your head to get items in shelves above your desk? Is the top line of the text displayed on your monitor at eye level?
- **Unbalanced work area** refers to twisting motion you do to reach items. If you’re right handed, and you use your right hand for all desktop activities such as answering the phone, you may have pain on your right side. Do you twist to see your monitor?
The solution: Place your monitor right in front of you. Are items you use directly ahead of you?

BACK, NECK, AND ARM PAIN ARE OFTEN THE RESULT OF REPEATED ACTIONS, OVER AND OVER, OVER TIME. ASSESS WHAT’S CAUSING YOUR PAIN AND ADJUST YOUR WORKSTATION.