

Desk Work

CHALLENGE

Many nonprofit people change the world while sitting at desks. Email management, writing donor letters, data tracking, and so much more happens from a desk. Nearly three-quarters of the people NAWA surveyed reported that extensive sitting is a challenge for their nonprofit. Prolonged sitting and desk work can cause various physical symptoms.

Various Physical Symptoms Resulting from Sitting

- Neck strain
- Shoulder tendinitis and bursitis
- Hand and wrist tendinitis
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Tennis and golfer’s elbow (*epicondylitis*)

Common Risk Factors

- Repetition (*like typing*)
- Static loading or sustained exertion (*like holding hands over keyboard*)
- Awkward postures (*like slouching or holding a phone to the ear*)
- Mechanical contact stress (*like using scissors*)
- Force (*like stapling*)

ACTIONS

- ❑ Examine opportunities to reduce risk. There are four levels to consider:

Organization	Office Environment	Individual Workstation	Individual Worker
Job Design	Lighting	Furniture	Unique Characteristics
Staffing	Noise	Chairs	
Work Schedules	Temperature	Accessories	
	Office design	Hardware Software	

- ❑ Check for the following:
 - Chairs are in good condition and fit the people sitting in them.
 - Materials are stored safely to prevent moving injuries.
 - Computer keyboards and monitors are placed at the right height.
- ❑ Explore your safety and health culture. Does your organization encourage breaks, standing up and moving around, or other interruptions to long periods of sitting?

RESOURCES

- [L&I Office Ergonomics webpage](#)
- [OSHA Computer Workstations eTool](#)
- [L&I Ergonomics Ideas Bank](#) — Use this tool to find solutions by industry and/or risk factor.