

Environment, Health & Safety

Safety Briefs

Please Post!

April/May 2005

A Levelheaded Approach to Computer Monitors



Monitor too high



Monitor too low



Correctly positioned monitor and user

If you wear bifocals while computing you may be tilting and holding your head back as you look through the bottom of your lenses to see the screen, placing unnecessary stress on your neck. Or maybe your monitor is positioned too high, or your chair is too low, causing you to tilt your head back to read the screen.

Similarly, a monitor placed too low (or a laptop on your lap) forces your head to tilt forward as you view the screen.

The result is the same: your neck strains to hold your heavy head upright. (Did you know the average human head weighs from 10-14 pounds?)

Correct monitor height is essential in reducing neck strain. The top of the screen should be level

with your eyes. This allows your head to remain upright, balanced over your neck and shoulders. Bifocal wearers may want a slightly lower monitor for comfortable viewing.

Use adjustable workstation features and accessories to position your monitor as necessary (including laptops) to achieve a neutral head position. Raise or lower yourself with an adjustable chair.

Learn more about ergonomic work practices and equipment that can improve comfort and reduce your risk of injury at <http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ergo>.

UCSD Risk Management Office Wins Award for Excellence

UCSD's Risk Management Office, a division of Environment, Health & Safety, received the 2005 Excellence Award for Best Risk Management Practices at a recent systemwide UC Risk Management Summit.

The award recognizes the UCSD campus and Medical Center's collective Workers' Compensation, General Liability, and Professional Liability (medical malpractice) programs.

Effective, successful programs depend on UCSD's day-to-day ability to identify, prevent, and manage the causes and costs of injuries, property loss, and financial liability.



Jon Schmidt, Campus Risk Manager, displays the 2005 Excellence Award.

If you have questions about UCSD's risk management programs, contact the Risk Management Office at (858) 534-2454 or ehsrisk@ucsd.edu.

Corridor Storage Policy

The Health and Safety Coordinating Council is revising the Exit Corridor Guidelines and policy for all non-clinical UCSD buildings. A recent survey of corridors has revealed conditions in many campus buildings that may hinder safe exiting during an emergency situation. The faculty-led Health and Safety Coordinating Council will work with EH&S to develop a campus-wide policy to limit storage of material in corridors, along with an implementation plan to have inappropriate material removed if necessary. The new policy is scheduled to be implemented by July 2005.

continued on back ... see Corridor Policy

Please Post or Circulate



“Safety Training Days” on Enrollment Central

Register for EH&S safety training
on Enrollment Central at:

<http://enrollmentcentral.ucsd.edu>

Browse “EH&S—Safety” under Course Topics for classes and schedules. Learn more about UCSD safety training resources at <http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/safetytraining>.

Web-based Computer Workstation Evaluation



If you work at a computer workstation four or more hours per day, take advantage of the new “Evaluating Your Computer Workstation for Comfort and Productivity” web-based tutorial on Enrollment Central.

Learn basic ergonomic principles that will enable you to configure your computer workstation and interact with it effectively and safely.

Find the web-based ergonomic tutorial and other ergonomic training resources on Blink at <http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ergo>.

If You Are a Departmental Personnel Specialist

Read the new procedures for informing employees about UCSD’s workers’ compensation program. Find them on Blink’s “Checklist for Departments With New Employees” page at http://blink.ucsd.edu/Blink/External/Topics/How_To/0,1260,2213,00.html.

Corridor Policy ... continued

The current exit corridor guidelines may be viewed at <http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/corridor>.

Send your comments regarding the creation and implementation of the new corridor policy to Doug Harvey at ehschem@ucsd.edu, Mail Code 0920, or call (858) 822-1579.

Managing Stress

Stress is a physiological response; it’s your body’s way of responding to a stimulus such as a challenge or a threat. Common stress responses include increased heart and breathing rates, muscular tension, and perspiration — physical changes that result when adrenaline and other stress hormones are released by the brain to pump you up to meet the challenge.

Stress is not necessarily bad. Managed stress can motivate and create energy. Most people, however, perceive stress negatively, as “distress.” Chronic negative stress can have a damaging effect on your body, and may weaken the immune system. Typical stress-related complaints include muscle pains, ulcers, sleep disruption, fatigue, and headaches. And a person who is run down or emotionally preoccupied is more likely to have an accident.

Stress may be unavoidable, but it is manageable. Try a variety of stress management methods.

- **Talk about it.** Talk about your problems and look for ways to change stress-producing situations.
- **Exercise regularly.** Aerobic exercise, like a brisk walk, is known to be one of the fastest, surest ways to cope with stress.
- **Take good care of your body.** Exercise, eat a balanced diet, restrict stimulants, and get adequate rest.
- **Learn deep relaxation techniques.** Deep breathing is the simplest, do-anywhere technique.
- **Take a break.** After 40 to 50 minutes at one task, get up, stretch, and move around.
- **Laugh!** Try to keep a sense of humor, even during difficult times. Laughter relaxes muscles and lightens your perspective.

Campus Casualties

Incident Reports

- An employee drilling PVC pipe suffered a lacerated eyelid when a piece flew up and hit him in the face.
- Standing on a chair with wheels to reach an upper shelf, an employee injured her elbow as she fell to the floor when the chair rolled out from under her.
- While cleaning a shower, an employee stepped up on a grab bar to reach higher. The bar broke and the employee fell to the floor.
- An employee’s dog, stopping in with it’s owner before they left on vacation, bit another employee on the lip.
- During feeding time at the Aquarium, an employee was bitten by a five-foot long leopard shark.