

Tips To Save Your Wrists

If you are having trouble with pain or discomfort in your wrist area, consult a physician or ask a massage therapist help you assess if muscle tension is contributing to the pain.

If you work at a desk, you may want to look at your work set-up and use these suggestions to reduce pain and avoid more serious injury. If your company has an ergonomics department, ask them to help you change your work station and body posture to work more safely.

1. Your keyboard height should ensure that your wrists are straight and level, never bent back. If you can't adjust your table height to accommodate this, you may want to move the keyboard into your lap.
2. When typing or using a mouse, your wrists should not rest on anything, and should not be bent up, down, or to the sides. Keep your hands relaxed hovering slightly over the keyboard and the middle knuckle aligned with the center of the wrist.
3. Move your hands using your whole arms instead of resting your wrists on something, and stretching your fingers to hit the keys. Move your hand to hit function keys instead of stretching to reach them. This may take some getting used to, but can help a great deal in preventing pain and injury.

Rest and Stretching

When you stop typing for awhile, rest your hands in your lap or let your arms hang to your sides. Take a moment to shake them out and enjoy the refreshed energy moving through them.

It may make a big difference if you take breaks to stretch. Bend your wrists forward and backward and circle them in both directions. Make tight fists and relax them 10-20 times. Ask your massage therapist for stretches specifically for the forearms. Set up a reminder chime on your computer or some other reminder to take frequent stretching breaks.

RESOURCE

Repetitive Strain Injury: A Computer User's Guide. Pascarelli, Emil M.D., John Wiley and Sons, 1994.