

# Health advice for working at home

Working from home during the Corona pandemic takes a toll on everyone. Both physically and mentally. NWO-I wants all of its employees to stay as healthy as possible during this crisis.

After adhering to the Dutch measures against coronavirus one of the important things to do is to stay in contact with your program leader. Do not only discuss your scientific work, but also any emerging physical problems due to substandard ergonomic working conditions at home. If necessary, we can offer assistance for your workplace at home. Also please talk about stress you have.

Many people have problems with working from home without personal contact with colleagues and friends, or with too much interference from people living in the same home. Furthermore general uncertainty, anxiety or even fear can take its toll.

Please feel free to discuss these issues with your program leader.



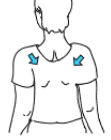



## Some Tips

### General

- Try to maintain a working day rhythm, including breaks.
- Alternate virtual meetings (via Zoom, Skype, etc.) and other computer work sufficiently with breaks so as not to increase the workload too much.
- Preferably make phone calls while standing or walking.
- Go outside during you lunchbreak when there is daylight.

### Exercise

- Exercise extra often and stand up regularly. Use break software or set an alarm clock.
- Do some stretching exercises several times a day, examples are given below.

 <p><b>Arms and wrists</b> Always start with a warming up the wrists. Grab your fingers together and twist your wrists loosely. Do this for about a minute.</p>	 <p><b>Neck, back and shoulders</b> Pull your shoulders as you breathe in. Lower your shoulders and exhale.</p>	 <p><b>Neck, back and shoulders</b> Sit up straight and pull your shoulder blades back and down.</p>
 <p><b>Neck, back and shoulders</b> Cross your arms and straighten the elbows forward, convex your back.</p>	 <p><b>Arms and wrists</b> Put your forearm with your hand flat on the table. Make a fist and raise your hand. Your arm does not move. Then lay your hand flat again.</p>	 <p><b>Neck, back and shoulders</b> Sit up straight and turn your head over your shoulder as far as possible. Do this in both directions.</p>

### Workplace

- Ideally you create a fully ergonomic workplace and you adhere to the checklist.
- At least use a separate keyboard and mouse keyboard.
- Preferably use a separate monitor and otherwise place your laptop screen at the correct height.
- Make sure your forearms are at the same height as the table to prevent having to shrug your shoulders.
- Remain seated upright, against the back of your chair. Try not to sit tense.
- If you're only working with a laptop regularly change where you work. For example switch between a couch and a kitchen table.

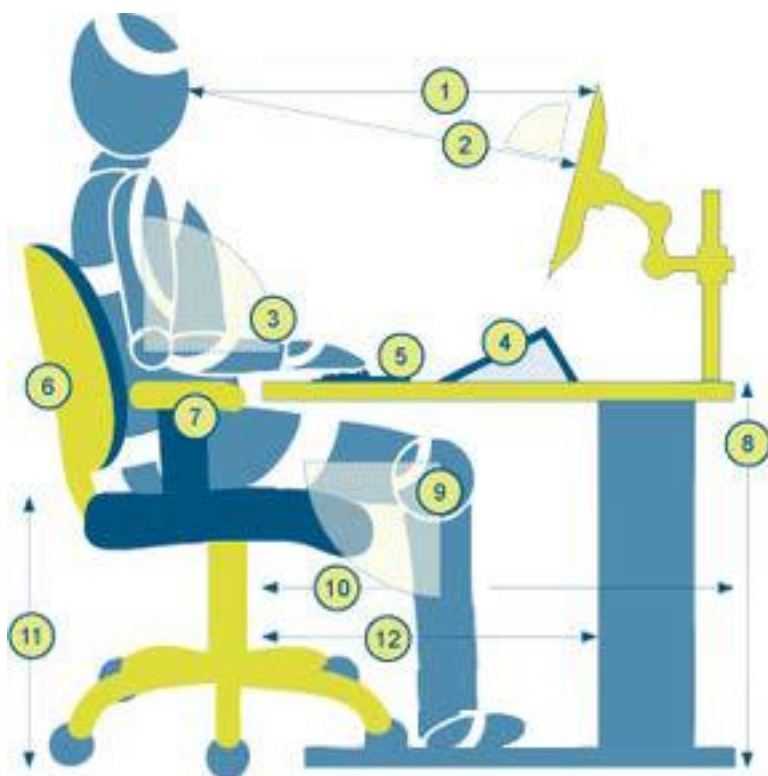


- With the sort days this winter make sure your lighting is sufficient.
- Make sure you work in a comfortable temperature and avoid drafts. (Do ventilate!)
- Especially when working from home, it's important that technology works flawlessly. Contact your supervisor or IT-department for help if necessary.

#### **Mental health**

- Stay in touch with other people as much as possible.
- Make sure you and your supervisor have an agreement about what you're expected to do while working from home.
- Keep a normal day rhythm.
- Get enough sleep.
- Exercise, go for a walk outside.
- Go outdoors during daylight.
- Talk to your supervisor about problems you have.

## Checklist



<b>Chair</b>	
Seating height (11, 9)	Sit with you back against the backrest and place your feet flat on the ground. Adjust your seat height (11) until the angle between you upper and lower legs is approximately 90 degrees (9).
Armrests (7, 3)	The armrests should support your whole forearm and should match the height of the desk (7). Your elbows should make an angle of approximately 90 degrees (3). The width of the armrests should match your shoulder width. The armrests are properly adjusted when you can loosely rest your arms on them.
Backrest (6)	Sit straight and adjust the backrest so that the backrest bulge fits in het hollow of you back.
Seat depth	Adjust the backrest position or seat so that the backrest gives comfortable support when you sit at the desk. There should be about a fist size space between your legs and the front of the seat.
<b>Desk</b>	
Size and height (10, 12, 8)	Use a desk with a minimum size of 120 x 80 cm (10). The thickness of the desk should be 5 cm or less. Make sure you have enough leg room. At least 60 cm width and 80 cm depth (12). The height of the desk should match the height of the armrests.
<b>Equipment</b>	
Keyboard (5)	Forearms, wrists and hands should form a straight line. Place the keyboard in a flat position.
Mouse	Keep your hand in line with your arm while your arm is rested on the armrest and the desk. Try to use your arm for the movements instead of you wrist.
Monitor (1, 2)	The top of your monitor should be at your eye height so the first line is slightly below your eye height (2). The distance to the monitor should be at least 50 cm. A larger monitor requires a greater distance. Guidelines: 14 inch - 50-70 cm, 15 inch - 55-75 cm, 17-18 inch - 60-85 cm, 21-22 inch - 75 -105 cm. Text on a monitor should be readable without having to strain your eyes.
Document holder (4)	If you work a lot with paper documents a document holder should be placed in line with the monitor.
Lighting	The surroundings of the monitor should be lit with approximately 200-400 lux. It is preferably place 2 to 3 meters from a wall and at a right angle from the window. The sun or lights should not reflect form the monitor to your eyes. Avoid a huge contrast between the light from the monitor and the surroundings.