

East Bay Ergonomics Newsletter

Spring Edition



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In This Issue...

We are at the second quarterly issue for our newsletter in 2019. Back issues are on the East Bay Ergonomics webpage. This quarter includes webpage updates, ergonomic activities and exercise opportunities on campus, and our current ergonomic discussion topic. I have developed a Google Group titled EB Ergonomics that sends out quarterly announcements in addition to this newsletter. You can go to Google Groups, search for “EB Ergonomics” and click on the “JOIN” button. Or, you can send me an email and I can send you an invite.

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East Bay Ergonomics Webpage Updates

<http://www.csueastbay.edu/riskmanagement/ergonomics/index.html>

1. There is a new **Ergonomic Assessment Request Tool**. You can now click a link on the webpage, which takes you to an online form that, once submitted, sends your ergonomic request directly to us. You can still call or email us directly, but the goal is to make this the preferred method to request ergonomic assistance.
2. We added stretching instructions for the hands, wrists, and legs to the “Movement and Exercise” page.

3. We added some brief information and links to the “Movement and Exercise” page that highlights exercise opportunities for staff and faculty on campus. Included is a link to the RAW Center’s membership page, which has information about classes and programs that they offer. Also included is contact information and program highlights for the Exercise is Medicine/Get Fit Stay Fit program, administered through the Kinesiology Department.

I have more materials to upload to the site and other items that are still under development. As with this newsletter, the website belongs to you. If you have any questions, comments, wishes, or a critique, we welcome all the feedback that we can get. Let us know what you think.

Ergonomic Activities for April thru June

Ergonomic activities are available for any staff member, faculty member, or group who wants to participate, regardless of ability. Contact Thomas Sneed at X57687, or at...

thomas.sneed@csueastbay.edu.

PRE-SCHEDULED EVENTS:

The following events occur during the lunch hour. Notes and/or materials are provided, if necessary.

Fridays from April 5th thru June 28th, Noon-1pm

THERAPEUTIC MOVEMENT: The emphasis is on intermediate to advanced level stretching, balance, core stabilization, and adjunctive techniques. Wear loose or stretchable clothing if you can. Do not let this scare you away if the subject interests you. Beginners and the uninitiated are welcome to attend. This is an interactive session with one on one instruction. The location of this activity will change from week to week. Contact Thomas Sneed to participate.

EVENTS AVAILABLE TO BE SCHEDULED:

We present this program with the thought in mind that we are in a work environment. No special clothing or equipment is typically required. Department or group meetings are preferred, but we also provide one on one instruction. You can have content and training duration configured to meet your needs.

Typical offerings include:

- Basic ergonomic techniques and guidelines for all job types.
- Back safety classes.
- Movement/stretching for any work type or body region.
- Basic core strengthening and balancing techniques.
- More complex or specific activities (mindfulness exercises, therapeutic self-care, etc.).

Please contact us with any questions or suggestions. Whether you participate in an on campus activity or not, do something for yourself every day.

Current Ergonomic Topic

WHAT'S WITH ALL THE RISK FACTORS AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

If you look at the East Bay Ergonomics webpage, it states that our purpose is to “promote employee health by decreasing workplace exposure to ergonomic risk factors”. So, I thought it would be nice to give an overview of what these risk factors are and how to shift the balance in your favor.

One example of how we try to accomplish this is providing you with furniture and equipment that fits your body dimensions and allows for comfortable navigation of your work area. You are at higher risk for injury if your environment causes you to work in awkward or biomechanically disadvantaged positions. Can some avoid injury without eliminating risk factors? It's possible. They are risk factors not guaranteed to get injured factors. But why take the chance? Besides, even if we could foresee the future and show that you would not injure yourself, why work with something that does not fit well, makes you work harder, and can inhibit your productivity?

Besides just having the right stuff that we need to work optimally, the way that we use our stuff matters as well. Suppose that I buy the latest and greatest mouse to use that fits my hand well and positions me where I am less likely to overuse my hand and arm muscles. However, if I over-grip it and twist my wrist around while using it, then my behavior is increasing my risk for injury. How we use our tools matters.

I would like to talk more in depth about risk factors having to do with exercise outside of work hours, movement throughout the day, and sedentary work. There are general lifestyle recommendations about exercise and its effect on chronic disease. You have probably heard some version of them before.

1. The latest recommendations for adult exercise outside of work is about 30 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic exercise 5 days per week (150 min. per week) and muscle strengthening activity of moderate intensity covering the major muscle groups 2 days per week. Increasing the intensity or the duration of exercise can produce additional benefit. Doing less is not recommended, but any exercise is better than no exercise at all. **This reduces one's risk for developing cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes, hypertension, several types of cancer, and enhances physical health and brain health.**
2. There are also recommendations to increase our movement during the workday. This applies to people working in less active jobs like office workers. This type of movement is called Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis (NEAT). The activities listed in the “Tips to Move More at Work” document on the East Bay Ergonomics webpage fall into this category.

This reduces one's risk for developing cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, and premature death.

3. Recommendations for mitigating the effects of sedentary work that are distinct from general exercise recommendations exist as well. It is important for this reason. Even if you exercise outside of work, you are still at risk of developing certain chronic diseases later in life if you habitually sit for extended periods. The current recommendations suggest getting out of your chair and moving for at least a couple of minutes every half hour. That equates to movement against gravity (sitting to standing) 16 times in an 8-hour workday.

After sitting for one hour, biochemical changes occur in both fat and glucose metabolism that can lead to increased fat storage and an increased cardiovascular disease risk. Movement helps to mitigate this risk.

So, look at your work environment when you consider the ergonomics of your job. But do not forget to also consider your habits, work techniques, quantity/quality of movement, and overall fitness.

You can find more information on these topics at...

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2018.

(You can search for and download this as a .pdf file from the internet.)

<https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/infographic-a-healthy-resolution-you-can-keep/>

(A Mayo Clinic infographic on NEAT.)

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/6178143_From_space_to_Earth_Advances_in_human_physiology_from_20_years_of_bed_rest_studies_1986-2006

(Research on bedrest studies associated with NASA. You can also search the activities of Dr. Joan Vernikos on the internet.)