ERGONOMIC STRATEGIES
SEATING

Facts about Prolonged Sitting Postures
- Research has shown that joint forces in the lower back are significantly higher when in a prolonged seated position as opposed to a prolonged standing position.

- Additionally, seated work increases the risk for low back pain due to sustained static loads imposed on the spine.

- Sitting for prolonged periods of time also causes continuous compression on the intervertebral discs, which hampers the flow of fluid and decreases joint nutrition.

Why is Office Seating Problematic?
- When sitting, it is very easy to slump into a posture which significantly changes the shape of the spine and drastically increases the pressure on the intervertebral discs in the low back.
  - This slumping posture can result in low back pain and over a prolonged period of time can cause more serious back problems.

- Many office chairs have traditional, padded, fixed-height lumbar (low back) supports that are unlikely to provide a comfortable or appropriate seat for people of various body types.

- People do not always prefer chairs that correspond to their body’s characteristics and therefore fail to adjust their chairs accordingly.

What Type of Office Chair is Optimal?
- Using a dynamic (adjustable) chair as opposed to a fixed chair is an easy way to help prevent low back pain associated with sitting.

- Dynamic chairs allow opposite movements of the seat and back support, which accommodate a reclining posture, allowing for relaxation of the back muscles.

- Office chairs should have a lumbar (low back) support positioned between the second and fifth lumbar vertebrae (lower four vertebrae of the spine).

- A chair should allow for easily varied sitting postures, in order to allow the spine to move rather than attempting to constrain people to an ‘ideal’ sitting position.

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