

"To protect the human resources and financial assets of our member districts in order to support the future of public education"



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Health and Wellness
Back Injury Prevention
The Ergo Chair and
Sitting Habits
eBacksafe®
Safety Calendar

CONTACT INFO

Maria C. Lorenzana
Loss Control Manager
(831) 296-9196 cell
mlorenzana@merma.org

HELPFUL LINKS

www.merma.org
www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/
[Schedule an Ergo
Evaluation](#)
[First Aid/CPR and
AED](#)

Health and Wellness

Spring is in the air! During the cooler months we may not exercise due to the weather being too cold or too wet. Now that fall and winter are long gone, it is time to spring clean and exercise!

Exercising doesn't need to be extreme, just avoid sitting throughout the whole day. Stand up and stretch your muscles, go for a walk, do jumping jacks, walk in place for 10 minutes, or walk up and down the stairs. The benefits of exercising are many, from improving your brain health to managing your weight, reducing the risk of disease, and improving your ability to do everyday activities. So take a break and exercise!

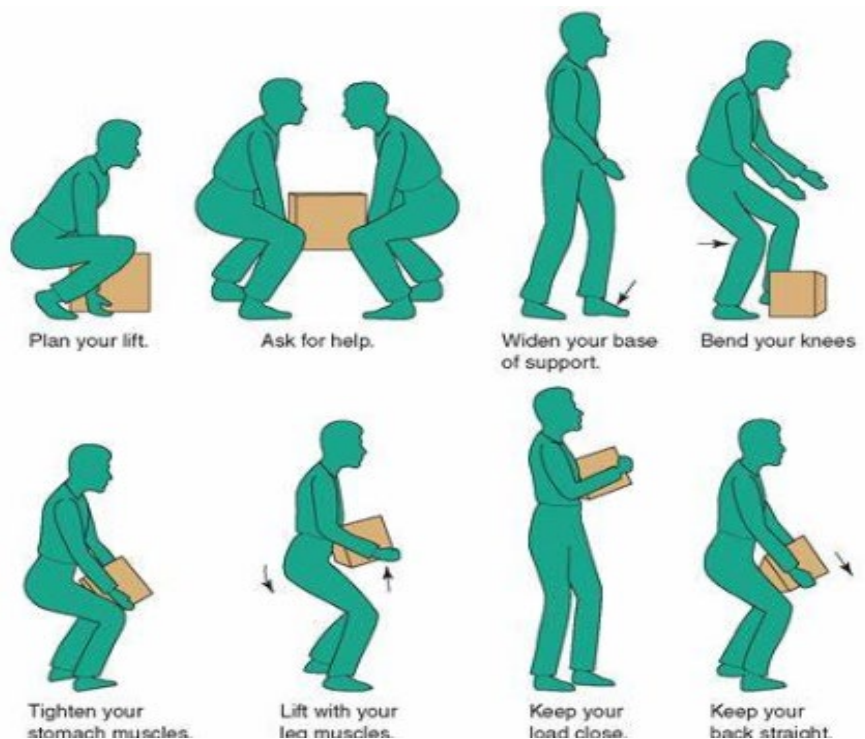
**TAKE CARE OF
YOUR BODY.
IT'S THE ONLY
PLACE YOU HAVE
TO LIVE IN.**



Back Injury Prevention

Back injuries are one of the most common type of injuries we face in our daily lives and can happen at work, at home or while on vacation. Back injuries are mostly due to sprains and strains, with frequent causes lifting materials that are too heavy or unstable, reaching for something in an awkward location, repetitive motion from twisting, reaching overhead or bending while lifting, and falling or tripping over debris.

Avoid bending your back while lifting. Use your legs to lift and keep your back straight. Get help when lifting heavy objects. Bring loads close to your body before lifting or attempting to handle. Place heavy items at waist level and when needed, use a step stool when item is too high to reach. Remove all tripping hazards prior to carrying objects, avoid taking the stairs, and make sure the item you are carrying is not blocking your vision.



The Ergo Chair and Sitting Habits

According to the National Library of Medicine, "prolonged sitting has been associated with musculoskeletal dysfunction" mainly due to sitting in a non-ergonomic chair, one of incorrect size, or the chair is not properly adjusted to fit the user.

About 60 percent of the ergonomic evaluations conducted within the Districts involve the use of conference or task chairs that do not have all the features needed to adjust to fit the user, and in some cases the chair is too big/too small or the employee has poor posture. In almost all cases, employees evaluated report having some sort of back discomfort.

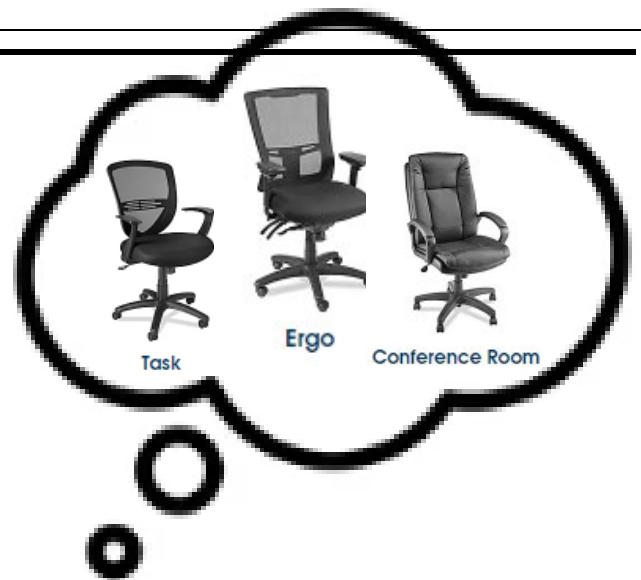
Ergonomic vs Conference Room Chair

The difference between an ergonomic and a task or conference room chair is that the ergonomic chair has features that allows the user to adjust the chair to their needs. The Ergonomics chair must include specifications for the following adjustments:

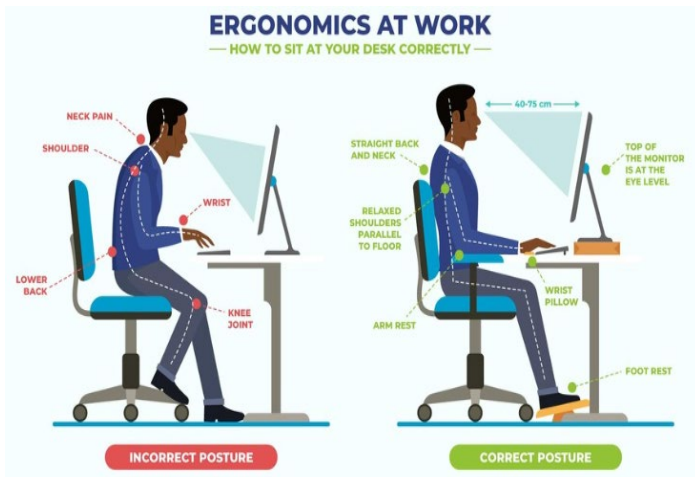
- Weight Capacity
- Height and width adjustable arms with comfort armrests.
- Tilt tension adjustment.
- Contoured, molded foam or mesh seat for support in all the right places.
- Forward seat tilt for upright sitting during computer tasks.
- Pneumatic seat height adjustment.
- Seat angle adjustment locks at user preference.
- Back support angle adjustment locks at user preference.
- Lumbar adjustable
- Seat slider for user specific seat depth.

Size specific, ergonomic chairs come in all shapes giving the employer the ability to select the chair that best fits the employee.

Conference room chairs and task chairs have fewer functions, generally only height adjustable and reclinable. The armrests, seat pan and lumbar



area are stationary so employees are not able to adjust the chair. In addition to ensuring that employees have adequate chairs, and these are properly adjusted, it is equally important that the users maintain adequate posture. Sit back for back support, avoid slouching and placing feet on the base of the chair. Use a footrest if the desk is too high to ensure that feet are supported.



eBacksafe® for Teachers and Paraeducators



We are excited to offer eBacksafe® virtual injury prevention program designed specifically for teachers and paraeducators. **Segments of the virtual safety training were customized and filmed locally to ensure that real-life wellness scenarios were addressed.**

FIT has been in business for 30 years helping school districts and other organizations throughout the US protect the health and wellbeing of employees. Fatigue, discomfort, pain, and injuries are often caused by Cumulative Micro Trauma, and when employees learn how to prevent it, their quality of life at work and home improve dramatically.

If you are looking for strategies to improve culture, morale, staffing, and safety, this is a great program that is free to our member districts.

Contact Maria Lorenzana for details about enrolling your teachers and paraeducators in this virtual training program.

April Safety Calendar

[Distracted Driving Awareness Month](#)

[April 15 - 19](#)
[National Work Zone Awareness Week](#)

[April 22 - 26](#)
[National Playground Safety Week](#)