

OHS Newsletter

British Columbia Institute of Technology

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https://www.bcit.ca/safetyandsecurity/safety/ohs_newsletters.shtml

For COVID-19 updates, refer to [Breaking News](#).

For more information, contact covidinfo@bcit.ca

Ergonomics

****New Ergonomic Resource Available****

Ergonomics matches workplace conditions and job demands to a person's capabilities, to improve worker safety and productivity. Applying the science of ergonomics can be especially helpful in reducing the risk of musculoskeletal injury (MSI), which is the most common work-related injury in B.C.

A new resource is now available, the [Ergonomic Self-Assessment Tool](#), which is suitable for both on campus and home office setup. If you are feeling discomfort, or would like to check to see if your computer workstation is optimally configured, refer to this tool as a first step to be able to problem solve. Two weeks after the self-assessment, you will be followed up with an email survey to check if the issue is resolved. If you still experience signs (swelling, redness or difficulty moving a particular body part) and symptoms (numbness, tingling and pain), indicate in the survey and you will be prompted to use the [online reporting system](#), IRIS (Incident Reporting and Information System) with further instructions to request an OHS assessment. Your manager will be notified as well when you submit the survey.

For ongoing symptoms, or when you've requested an OHS ergonomic assessment, report to your manager/supervisor, and complete an online Injury/Illness/Exposure report.

How to increase productivity and reduce discomfort at your computer workstation

If you are working long hours at your computer workstation, consider getting up and moving around while talking on the phone. You can also perform [office stretches](#) to help keep you from getting stiff. If possible, don't schedule back to back meetings, or schedule 45 minute meetings instead of 1 hour meetings.

Take your breaks, such as lunch, coffee and micro breaks:*

- Breaks should be taken before getting tired. The timing of the break is more important than its length.
- Breaks or changes of activity should be included in working time, and reduce screen workload.
- Short, frequent breaks are better than occasional, longer breaks: e.g., a 5-10 minute break after 50-60 minutes continuous computer work is likely to be better than a 15 minute break every 2 hours or follow the 20/20/20 guideline - take a 20-second stretch break every 20 minutes and look about 20 feet away
- If possible, breaks should be taken away from the screen
- Schedule breaks into Outlook to remind you to take them

Many ergonomics resources are available on the BCIT website [Ergonomics page](#).

*References: **Health and Safety Executive** <https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/vdubreaks.htm>

WorkSafeBC <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/setting-up-home-workspace?lang=en>

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WHY HEALTH & SAFETY NEWSLETTER?

Health and Safety is a priority at BCIT. OHS newsletters contain first aid statistics, compliance concerns, and updates of new legislation and interest articles.



Managing hearing before hearing manages you

You may already be aware that our hearing navigates through daily activities automatically with our brain and ears working in tandem, however The Canadian Hearing Society reports 27 percent of adults have some degree of hearing loss and this rate increases with age to 44 percent for aged 60 - 69. Left untreated hearing loss is linked to depression, isolation, loneliness, withdrawal, anger and fatigue.

A full third of hearing loss is noise induced and preventable, with the best prevention strategy as follows:

- **Remove:** is the first line of defence focusing on taking out noise entering your listening space.
- **Reduce:** the amount of noise exposure in a 24 hour period
- **Rest :** after noise exposure allowing the hearing system time to recover

Using hearing protection when necessary preventing noise or music induced hearing loss is most important, especially for new employees as it occurs gradually over time and usually goes unnoticed until it's too late. Early detection is essential to decrease the impact of hearing loss by detecting and screening hearing loss in an earlier stage.

Construction workers are often exposed to on-the-job noise that permanently damages hearing, so most importantly utilize hearing protection when exposed to power tools such as air pressure guns, chop saws, circular saws, routers, and planers.

Additional information on hearing conservation can be found a WorkSafeBC.com and typing HEAR in the search bar. For Audiometric testing at BCIT contact BCIT_Audiometric@bcit.ca or call 604-432-8712.

The more you manage hearing loss the less it will manage you!

Employee First Aid Incidents: Quarterly statistics – Q1 & Q2, 2020

