

# Physiotherapy Newsletter

## October – Healthy Workplace Month & National Occupational Therapy Month

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October is Canada's Healthy Workplace Month, where the goal is to raise awareness of what it means to have a comprehensive approach to a healthy workplace. The concept of a healthy workplace can be broken down into three sub-headings: Health & Lifestyle Practices, Workplace Culture & Supportive Environment, and Physical Environment & Occupational Health and Safety.

**Health and Lifestyle Practices:** This aspect of a healthy workplace involves keeping you, the worker, healthy and happy. This means eating well-balanced healthy meals, getting the right amount of sleep each night and of course plenty of physical activity.

**Workplace Culture & Supportive Environment:** For a worker to feel comfortable, and thus be productive, there must be a supportive environment in place. This means having a workplace that is accepting of all employees, regardless of such things as race, gender, ethnicity, or religion. It also means having a positive work environment, with plenty of communication, which helps build trust among employees. These simple, but crucial measures can go a long way in ensuring that workers are both happy and productive.

**Physical Environment & Occupational Health and Safety:** This component of a healthy workplace involves the actual setup of the work environment, and the physical act required to complete any job. Work stations should be constantly evaluated to ensure that they are set up properly for each worker's body type. It is important to make sure that your work station is set up at a proper height to ensure your body is supported, and that there is proper lighting so workers don't have to strain their eyes. Taking frequent breaks from sustained postures is important to avoid causing any deformation of our body tissues that lead to break-down or injury. Taking these measures will help to reduce incidences of injuries, whether they are of sudden onset or from something like a repetitive strain injury (example: carpal tunnel syndrome). Please contact our ergonomist Mike Lanigan ([mlanigan@kos.net](mailto:mlanigan@kos.net)), one of our physiotherapists or occupational therapists for tips on how to properly arrange your work station.

## Additional Tips:

- ✓ Plan your workday; set priorities and realistic goals to help you decide what is urgent and what can wait until later.
- ✓ Pace your tasks throughout the day so your energy level remains high.
- ✓ Schedule and take regular breaks throughout the day.
- ✓ Learn and practice simple stress reducing strategies such as deep breathing techniques several times throughout the day.
- ✓ Help create a positive attitude and supportive social environment at work simply by being friendly; a smile goes a long way to brighten any day.

## Occupational Therapy Month

October is also National Occupational Therapy Month in Canada. Occupational therapy promotes health and well being through enabling meaningful occupation for people of all ages (Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists position statement on Everyday Occupations and Health, 2003).

Occupations include all the activities that you want and need to do in order to live and enjoy your life. These include:

- Self care (personal care and mobility or how you get around)
- Productivity (employment, homemaking and for children – play)
- Leisure (hobbies, sports, and social activities)

### How will Occupational Therapy help me?

Whether you need assistance as a result of injury, illness, the natural aging process, or your environment, Occupational Therapists can help you to:

- Find a different way of doing things
- Help maintain the function you have
- Adapt the equipment you use
- Change your environment
- Manage pain, fatigue, and stress caused by injury or disease
- Prevent injuries through the use of adaptive equipment or modifying your environment

To find out more about Occupational Therapy and National Occupational Therapy Month, visit [www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=2326](http://www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=2326). You can arrange a consultation with an Occupational Therapist at Limestone Health Consultants by calling the clinic or by clicking [www.limestonehealth.ca/services-occupationalhealth.cfm](http://www.limestonehealth.ca/services-occupationalhealth.cfm) .

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