

# PLAYING IT **SAFE**

## **Pain-Free Hands, Wrists and Fingers**

*Tips for healthy hands, wrists and fingers in the office*

You may know that sitting in the same position for many hours a day and repeating the same motions can cause injuries to your hands, wrists and fingers over time. However, if you have no choice but to stay in one place, what can you do short of surgery or a drastic career change to alleviate the pain?

Following are some simple, helpful stretches that can relieve pain and keep your hands in good condition, even when you're performing repetitive motions. Be sure to breathe deeply while you stretch. If you begin to feel pain, you're stretching too far.

### **Finger Stretch**

If you spend a good deal of time writing with a pen or using the keyboard, take a finger-stretching break.

- Separate and straighten your fingers until you feel the stretch. Hold for 10 seconds.
- Bend your fingers at the middle knuckles in a clawing position. Hold for 10 seconds.
- Relax.

### **Arm and Shoulder Stretch**

Your forearms may become fatigued after working on a computer for an extended period of time. Stretch them as follows.

- Lace your fingers together and turn your palms facing out.

- Straighten your arms in front of you. Hold the stretch for 15 seconds.

### **Wrist Stretch**

Stiffness and pain in the wrists is common in the office. Try this stretch to relax them.

- Lift one arm and hold it comfortably in front of you, palm facing down. Pull it toward you using your other hand. Hold the stretch for 15 to 30 seconds.
- Repeat with the opposite arm.

### **Wrist Stretch #2**

- Lift one of your arms and hold it in front of you, palm facing up. Bend it downward and pull it toward you with your other hand. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
- Repeat with the opposite arm.

### **Get the Blood Moving**

To increase blood flow in your arms, extend your arms in front of you, hands in fists. Rotate your wrists outward, then inward.

### **Make it a Habit**

Try to do these stretches on a regular basis throughout the day. If pain persists, see a doctor about the possibility of carpal tunnel syndrome or tendon inflammation.



### **Sudden Injury**

In addition to chronic pain, hands can be injured suddenly, too. Be sure to use caution when using and storing sharp or potentially dangerous tools like letter openers, staplers, box cutters or scissors, and always wear a rubber finger cap when dealing with significant amounts of paper.