

Title:

Computers And RSIs

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Summary:

Part of our everyday lives, computers have evolved from a tool at work to a personal calendar, a friendly network facilitator and a necessary guide. Although computers have transformed the way we see things and understand the world around us, because their use imposes physical and mental demands on their users, it leads to several health problems, like Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSIs), eye strain, neck and lower back pains and headaches.

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Article Body:

Part of our everyday lives, computers have evolved from a tool at work to a personal calendar, a friendly network facilitator and a necessary guide. Although computers have transformed the way we see things and understand the world around us, because their use imposes physical and mental demands on their users, it leads to several health problems, like Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSIs), eye strain, neck and lower back pains and headaches.

I do not about you, but when I bought a year ago my brand new laptop, I was extremely interested in reading everything included in the package in an effort to take good care of my precious new possession. One of the documents the producer have included in the printed materials I opened to read, was one that directed me to follow specific guidelines on how to effectively and safely use my portable PC. Perhaps I was very lucky, as I later discovered that only recently have manufacturers been forced to include such user guides, or began making an effort to overcome health related issues and complains by introducing ergonomic products and warning labels on some equipment. This is very important, as the designers' ability to understand that users need simple guidelines in order to be adequately informed of the risks involved and trained on proper body posture, monitor height, elbows distance from the body or recommended hours of use, can prevent computer users, even young, physically active individuals, from suffering in the future.

Specifically, one has to be aware of the hazards of Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) to the hands and arms resulting from inappropriate use of the computer's keyboard and mice. People in a variety of professions, like musicians or chiropractics, who repeatedly exercised pressure on their hands, shoulders, and arms, and have injured their tendons, muscles, and nerves, have been reported as the first cases of RSIs victims. Unfortunately, the list is increasing today, as more and more computer users request medical treatments in order to overcome the symptoms of RSIs on their hands, wrists, arms, shoulders and necks. Medical professionals and patients have reported that tightness, discomfort, stiffness, soreness or burning, numbness, and loss of coordination or strength are the most common symptoms linked to RSIs.

Since this serious painful situation is far easier to prevent than to cure once contracted, it is important for people to be educated and understand when and how RSIs can occur leaving ex-computer users permanently disabled and unable to perform simple tasks, such as driving or even dressing, without requesting help. Ergonomic gadgets, palm rests, maintaining the right posture and overall good working habits can reduce the risks associated with computer use and help young users understand how important it is to be always on alert for RSIs symptoms.