

Ergonomic Tips for Dental Clinics

- Warm up and stretch before you begin work and throughout the day.
- Position the patient so that your elbows are lower than your shoulders. This helps avoid tucking your chin to your chest.
- Adjust the patient's chair when accessing different quadrants.
- Avoid tilting, twisting, bending forward and slumping. Use the hip hinge method if you must lean forward.
- Alternate between sitting and standing when possible.
- Place instruments, materials, and medications within easy reach.
- Schedule patients so that you alternate between long, difficult cases and short, easier cases.
- Use a surgical magnification system when necessary. It should allow for a comfortable posture while maintaining a close view of the task at hand.
- Stretch your wrists and fingers throughout the day; especially the area between the thumb and index finger.
- Stabilize your hand by resting your elbow on the chair's back or arm.
- Use hand instruments with larger diameter handles. A larger handle distributes pressure across a larger group of hand muscles.
- Use full-arm motions rather than wrist strokes when possible.
- Avoid using coiled cords and hoses. The tension transfers to the hand when you stretch the cord.
- Wear gloves that fit and don't restrict movement.
- Take breaks! Pausing briefly and frequently can minimize fatigue and the risk of musculoskeletal disorders.

