

## OHS & Your Chair

Having good posture and an adjustable chair are the most important aspects of a comfortable office environment. Learn how to adjust your chair to ensure you are sitting with good posture. The following is an easy guide to help you adjust your chair to suit your needs.

**Height** - While standing, adjust the height of the chair so that the highest point of the seat is just below your knee cap. This should allow your feet to rest firmly on the floor when seated. If you feel pressure near the back of the seat, raise your chair. If you feel pressure near the front of the seat, lower your chair. The goal is to evenly distribute your weight.

**Seat tilt** - Seat tilt can be adjusted to improve your comfort. This will also affect your weight distribution.

**Depth** - When sitting, the seat pan should allow you to use the back support without the front of the seat compressing against the back of your knees. If the seat is too deep, try a back support (lumbar roll or Obus Forme) to reduce the size of the seat.

**Back support** - When sitting, adjust the backrest so it supports the natural curve of your lower back (lumbar curve). The tilt of the back support should allow you to seat with your upper body slightly recline.

**Width** - The seat pan should be wide enough so that it does not apply pressure to the sides of your thighs.

**Armrests** - Armrests can provide support for the upper part of your forearms, thereby reducing stress on your shoulders and back. However, armrests should not prevent the chair from being drawn close to the desk nor restrict natural movements. If your armrests cannot be adjusted to allow for this, consider removing or replacing them. Also, keep in mind that soft armrests will eliminate contact stresses on your elbows.

Adjust your chair frequently throughout the day and get up at regular intervals. Adjusting the chair allows the joints to change position and reduces muscle tension and tissue compression from some areas of the chair. Despite attempts to find the “ideal posture”, no posture is good for a long period of time.

Regular stretch breaks of about 30 to 60 seconds every half hour will:

- \* improve blood circulation
- \* significantly decrease the level of discomfort associated with sitting in one position