

## Trapped by Your Mouse

Posted in: Office Ergonomics, Home Office

When you look at the carefully molded collection of plastic to the right or left of your keyboard, it seems pretty harmless. Quiet, unassuming, a little slippery...

But BEWARE – despite their ever improving good looks, these little pests can pack quite the bite. It's amazing that just over twenty years ago, the mouse was born.

Since then, the 90's brought the computer to everyone's cubicle and in this century, it seems like we have been finding more and more 'to-do' items, gradually increasing our workday (50-60 hrs anyone?) and decreasing idle time.

What's interesting is that since we started computing, the number of tasks that we do using only the mouse has continued to skyrocket (e.g. internet use, enterprise databases).

Many workers today spend over 75% of their day using their mouse, the numeric keypad and other keys with their right hand. Is it any wonder that many of us experience discomfort in the right arm?

The ergonomic risk factors at work here are the same suspects we deal with when setting up our workstation: (1) awkward and (2) static postures of the fingers, wrist, and shoulder (3) many, many repetitions, (4) contact stress on the wrist or (5) the force with which they grip their mouse.

The good news is that the solutions can be simple – keeping the mouse close, holding the mouse with a straight (neutral) wrist posture, making sure the mouse settings are optimized and considering alternatives when needed (left hand mouse use, alternative input devices).



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This article was  
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