



## Video Game & Electronic Injury Prevention Tips

The American Society of Hand Therapists (ASHT) offers the following tips to prevent hand injuries while using portable electronics and video games.

1. **Use a neutral grip when holding the controller** – A neutral grip is when the wrist is straight, not bent in either direction.
2. **Take a break every hour or switch to another activity** – This will help to prevent overuse of just one muscle or tendon.
3. **Make sure the monitor is at the correct height** – While looking at the horizon, your eyes should be looking at the top of the monitor.
4. **If you are typing, the keyboard should be at a height so the wrist/hands are straight and forearms are parallel to the keyboard surface.**
5. **When using a handheld device like a tablet, put pillows in your lap and rest arms on pillows** – This will allow you to keep your head in a more upright position and decrease neck strain. The pillows will help support the arms so they do not have to be held up in the air.
6. **You should be sitting in an appropriate chair** – This would be a chair that allows you to comfortably put your feet on the floor and also provides good back support.
7. **When using a single control device (like a mouse), switch hands frequently.** This will allow the hands to rest and reduce fatigue.
8. **Frequently focus on a distant object (away from the monitor) to help reduce eye fatigue.**

**Performing gentle stretches can be a helpful break when using electronic devices. Below are some stretches that may be helpful.**

- Fold your hands together and turn your palms away from your body as you extend your arms forward. You should feel a stretch all the way from your shoulders to your fingers. Hold for 10 seconds.
- Fold your hands together and turn your palms away from your body, but this time, extend your arms overhead. You should feel the stretch in your upper torso and shoulders to hand. Hold for 10 seconds.
- Place your hand just above the back of the elbow and gently push your elbow across your chest toward the opposite shoulder. This is a stretch for the upper back and shoulder. Stretch both the right and left arms. Hold for 10 seconds.
- Raise one arm overhead. Bend the elbow. Place the opposite hand on the bent elbow and gently push the elbow back further. This is a stretch for the triceps (muscle on the back of the upper arm). Stretch both the right and left arms. Hold for 10 seconds.

- Extend an arm in front of you, making sure the elbow is completely straight. With your palm down, take the opposite hand and bend the hand down toward the floor. Then turn the palm up, and stretch the hand back toward the floor. This stretches the forearm and wrist muscles. Hold for 10 seconds.

- Open up hands and spread the fingers as far as possible. Hold for 10 seconds.

- *Note: These exercises should never be painful when completing them. You should only feel a gentle stretch. Should you experience pain, please consult a hand therapist or physician.*