

# Joint Protection Strategies

Presented by: Courtney Potter, MHS, OTR/L

# What is Hand Therapy?

- ▶ Hand therapy is the art and science of evaluating and treating injuries and conditions of the upper extremity (shoulder, arm, elbow, forearm, wrist and hand)
- ▶ Therapists provide non-operative interventions, preventative care and post-surgical rehabilitation for a wide variety of upper extremity disorders
- ▶ **Common diagnoses**
  - ▶ Arthritis
  - ▶ Tendon repairs
  - ▶ Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
  - ▶ Trigger Finger
  - ▶ Sprains, Strains, and Fractures
  - ▶ Nerve compression injuries
  - ▶ Dislocations

# What is Hand Therapy?

- ▶ Your hand therapist is either an occupational or physical therapist who specializes in the treatment and evaluation of the upper extremity. I am an occupational therapist.
- ▶ Develops a plan of care according to each patient's needs and goals and works closely with physicians
- ▶ Interventions:
  - ▶ Patient education
  - ▶ Therapeutic exercises
  - ▶ Therapeutic activities
  - ▶ Manual Therapy
  - ▶ Modalities
  - ▶ Custom orthotic fabrication



# Joint Protection Strategies

- ▶ Respect your pain
- ▶ Balancing act between activity and rest
- ▶ When possible, use larger joints and distribute weight more evenly
  - ▶ Carry grocery bags on forearms instead of hands
- ▶ Use both hands when possible



# Good Posture isn't Just for Proper Etiquette

- ▶ It's good for your joints!
- ▶ Take a look at your workstation

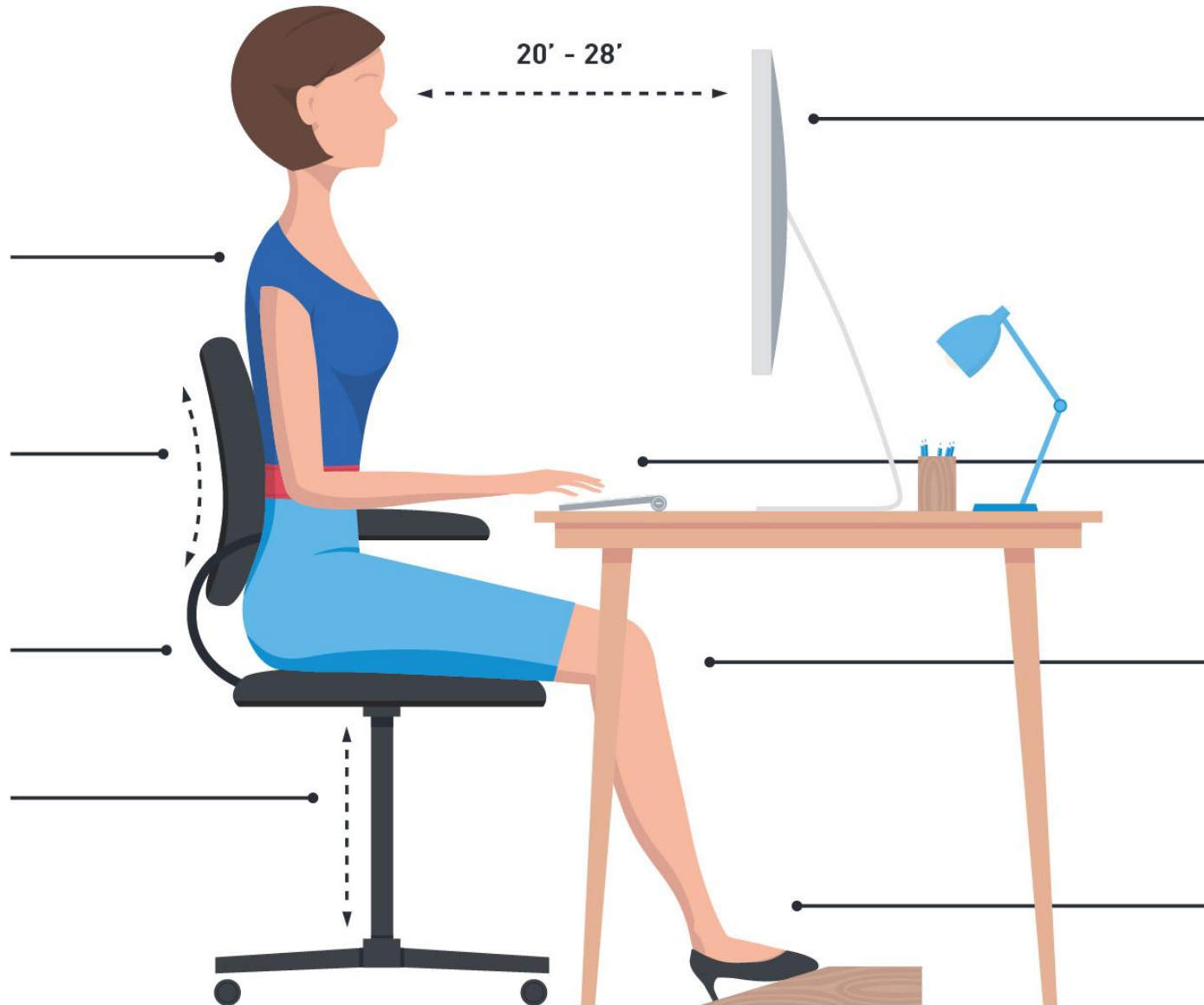
# CORRECT SITTING POSTURE

Upper back straight with shoulders relaxed at sides.

Backrest of the chair supports curve in the lower back.

Hips as far back on the chair as possible.

Adjustable seat for optimal height.



20' - 28'

Top of monitor at eye level or slightly below.

Arms relaxed at sides with upper arm and lower arm forming a 90° angle. Wrists straight with fingers relaxed.

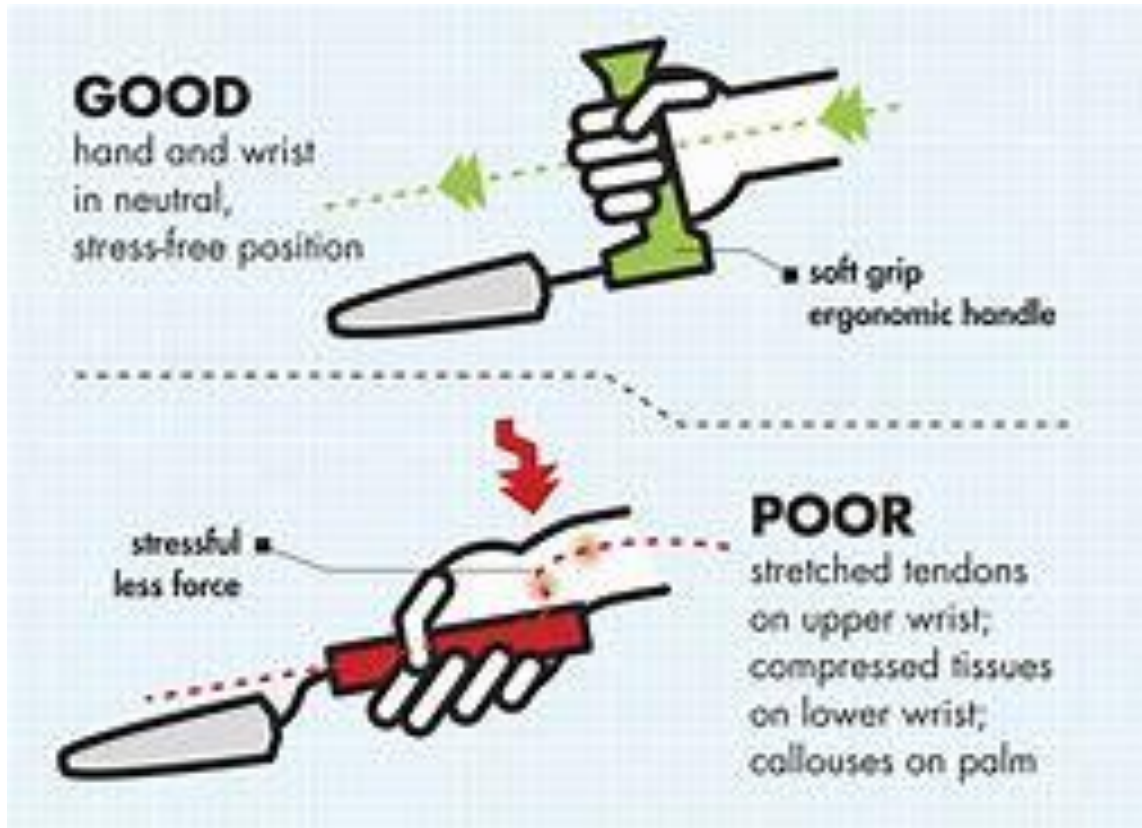
Lower legs at a 90° > 110° angle to thighs with adequate legroom above.

Feet flat on the ground or resting on a footrest.

# Things to Avoid. . .

- ▶ Maintaining one position for a long time
  - ▶ Take stretch breaks
- ▶ Repetitive tasks without breaks or changes in activity
  - ▶ Crocheting, using a screwdriver
- ▶ Tight grasping
  - ▶ Use a relaxed grip and larger handles on tools

# Key Word: Ergonomic





Let's Take a Look at Some Other Joint  
Protection Strategies...

The right side of the slide features a decorative graphic composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent green triangles and polygons. The colors range from a light, pale green to a dark, forest green. The shapes are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, with some shapes appearing to be layered behind others. The overall effect is a modern, abstract design element.

# Where Are We Located?



## **Address:**

5 North La Plata Court, Suite 102, La Plata,  
MD 20646

# To make an Appointment:

- ▶ Please call **301.609.5494**
- ▶ **CharlesRegionalRehabilitation.com**
- ▶ Fax **301.392.6109**
- ▶ Physician's referral required for services.
- ▶ Most insurances accepted.

# Any Questions?

- ▶ Courtney Potter MHS, OTR/L
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**Thank You!**

