Risks resulting from physical work load (posture) in teaching

Teaching may lead to postural risks

Static postures
- Sitting
- Standing

Strained postures
- Flexion of the torso
- Torsion of the torso
- Elbows above the shoulders

The risks arising from a strained posture at work may be due to lack of alignment of the joints.

Adopting safe postures will not hurt your back.

Regular pressure
Aligned intervertebral disc

To ensure that you adopt a safe posture at work, identify the risk factors and follow the recommendations below.
Physical strains in the classroom

Identify postural **RISK FACTORS** during teaching in the classroom.

**Risk factors** are circumstances or situations that can cause or lead to increased risk.

### Risk factor: flexion of the torso

- **Attending to students** at the study desk

- **Computer tasks** in a standing position

- **Writing tasks** on the lower half of the board

*Prolonged* or frequent flexion with the torso inclined by more than 20º.

- Writing on the lower half of the board (below the level of the elbow).
Identify postural **RISK FACTORS** of teaching in the classroom.

**Risk factor: elbow above the shoulders**

- Working **often** with the **elbow above the shoulder**.
- Writing on the **top half** of the board.
- Applying **excessive force** while writing helps to increase the risk.

**Risk factor: torsion of the torso**

- Communicating with students while you are writing on the board.
- Prolonged or frequent torsion with the torso at an angle of more than **10º**.
- Talking to students while writing on the blackboard by **twisting your torso**.

**Blackboard**

**Writing on the board**

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Risk factor: static working postures (sitting and standing)

Static standing or sitting for long periods of time and without changing position.

The lack of a change in posture (standing/sitting) and static standing (working in a standing position without wandering about) are elements that generate a risk or contribute to increasing it.

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Follow the **POSTURAL RECOMMENDATIONS** to avoid bending your torso for a long period or repeatedly.

**Flexion of the torso**

Make sure that you keep your **torso aligned** while you are attending to students:
- Avoid continually bending your torso.
- Avoid inclining your body at an angle of more than 20°.

To avoid straining your back, make sure that you have **something to lean on**.

**Lifting documents** from your desk helps you to adopt a safe posture.

Make sure that you sit down when the height of the work surface obliges you to bend your torso for a **long period** or **repeatedly** (> 2 times/minute).
Follow the recommendations to avoid bending your torso for a long period or repeatedly.

### Torsion of the torso

If you need to address the students while you are writing on the board, make sure that you turn your body at the same time as your feet.

- **Torsion of the torso of more than 10° and excessive twisting of the neck. The torso and head are not aligned with the feet.**

- **The feet, the head and the torso must move simultaneously.** This ensures that safe, neutral postures are adopted.

### Elbow above the shoulders

To ensure a safe posture while you are writing on the board, make sure that you write:

- Below the level of your head, and
- Above the level of your elbow.
Introduction

Make sure that you walk around the classroom and avoid standing without moving for long periods of time.

Make sure that you sit so that your back is supported by the back of the chair.

Avoid hunching.
Align your head, neck and torso.

Adopting hygienic postures contributes to efficient and healthy voice projection.

Combine standing with sitting.

To relax your back, place one foot slightly forward and alternate the foot you use for support.