



## Healthy Computing Tips for a Low-EMF Computer Workstation

FACTS THAT

SIMPLIFY

YOUR

HEALTHY LIFE

- Choose a low-EMF LCD flat screen
- Keep sufficient distance from electronic devices
- Prefer using your laptop in battery mode
- Pick shielded extension and power cords
- Stay away from metal and magnets
- Get rid of statics
- Look for low-EMF lighting
- Minimize cell phone use
- Hold on to your landline
- Stick with wired connections

### **CHOOSE A LOW-EMF LCD FLAT SCREEN**

Look for the TCO label [www.tcodevelopment.com](http://www.tcodevelopment.com), the worldwide leading low-emission standard from Sweden that also guarantees good ergonomics, low toxicity, and high energy efficiency.

*Avoid using unshielded CRT monitors.*

### **KEEP SUFFICIENT DISTANCE FROM ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

EMF emissions decrease with increasing distance.

Keep a minimum of two feet to the computer screen—also good for eye health—and two to three feet to all other equipment.

*Avoid placing your feet right next to the multiple-outlet power strip.*

### **PREFER USING YOUR LAPTOP IN BATTERY MODE**

When not plugged in, the electric field emissions are the lowest.

Use an external keyboard to avoid high magnetic fields at your hands.

*Avoid placing a laptop in your lap!*

### **PICK SHIELDED EXTENSION AND POWER CORDS**

The grounded foil shield around the conductors contains the electric field and drastically reduces or even eliminates exposures.

*Avoid running extension and power cords in close proximity to your body.*

### **HOLD ON TO YOUR LANDLINE**

Corded phones emit no microwave radiation. A longer phone cord will give you some mobility. Cordless phones emit microwave radiation just like cell phones do. DECT cordless phones emit pulsed microwave radiation 24/7—no matter whether you make a phone call or not.

*Avoid using DECT cordless phones; never place it on your desk.*

©2010

## **MINIMIZE CELL PHONE USE**

To reduce your microwave radiation exposure, keep cell phone calls short, prefer texting, and never use it while driving.

Keep your cell phone at arm's length: use the speakerphone, carry it in a separate bag, and turn it off whenever possible.

*Avoid putting a cell phone next to your head or at your belt.*

## **STICK WITH WIRED CONNECTIONS**

Whether it's your Internet, keyboard, mouse, or printer, choose a wired connection to avoid continuous microwave radiation exposure. Disable the wireless networks such as Wi-Fi on your computer, laptop, or router.

*Avoid close proximity to Wi-Fi hot spots and wireless routers.*

## **LOOK FOR LOW-EMF LIGHTING**

Have natural daylight every day. Incandescent and UV-protected, line-voltage halogen lamps are the safest choice in lamps close to your body. All lamp types benefit from grounded and shielded wiring.

*Avoid (compact) fluorescent lamps, especially in your desk lamp.*

## **GET RID OF STATICS**

Unshielded CRT monitors, Plexiglas furniture, and synthetic carpeting can build up large amounts of static electricity. Prefer naturally antistatic surface treatments like wood flooring and true linoleum, and all-cotton curtains and covers. Make sure that your antislip chair mat is antistatic.

*Avoid non-antistatic floor coverings.*

## **STAY AWAY FROM METAL AND MAGNETS**

Steel desks, steel mechanisms in adjustable office chairs, and steel reinforcement in concrete walls distort the earth's magnetic field. Keep a one- to three-foot distance from all things metal. Watch out for hidden magnets in receivers, headsets, and loudspeakers.

*Avoid metal desks.*

## **GET YOUR COMPUTER WORKSTATION TESTED**

- (1) To establish a safe background level,
- (2) To learn how to use electronic devices with confidence for the least amount of exposure, and
- (3) To replace devices causing the highest exposures with safer technologies.

For more detailed information on how to reduce your personal exposure to electromagnetic fields and microwave radiation, see the paper on *Low-Emission Office Environments* by Katharina Gustavs at

[www.buildingbiology.ca/healthyoffice.php](http://www.buildingbiology.ca/healthyoffice.php)