

whitecoat newsletter



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Ergonomics

“Doctor, you asked me to walk and I have developed foot pain, leg pain and back pain.” This is not an unusual statement from many patients. If one had worn a proper shoe, the problem could have been avoided. If you develop pain, it is bad ergonomics and if you don't, it is good ergonomics.

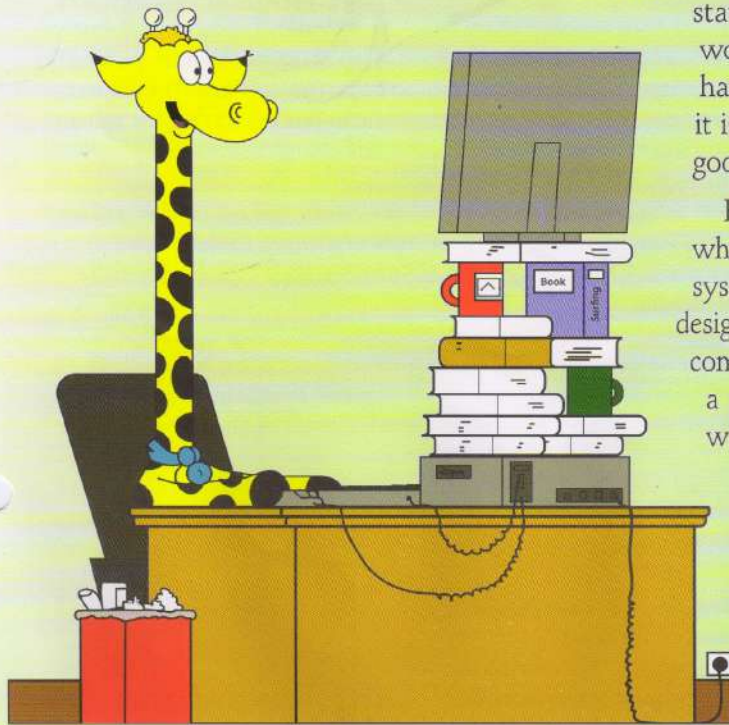
Ergonomics is about designing for people, wherever they interact with, products, systems or processes. An ergonomically designed product is easier to use, safer, more comfortable and more efficient. It may be a pillow, a chair, a computer table, a two wheeler or a car.

When you try to adjust or adapt to a bad design you may develop an injury or may aggravate it. Accidents do not happen, they evolve. And, prevention is always better than cure.

Insurance is popular and safety is not. People are willing to part with a lot of money for treatment of an eventual event, but think twice before buying safer equipment.

So, choose an ergonomically designed equipment, system or process, be safe, be comfortable and be efficient. Buy a good shoe, wear your helmet and wear your seat belts.

— Dr (Capt) A S Dodd



Now, that's more ergonomic...

Queue Problems and Solutions

Definition:

A line or sequence of people, goods, or vehicles awaiting their turn to be attended or to proceed.

Queue = waiting line

QUEUE or Waiting in line is a part of our everyday life. Waiting in line may be due to overcrowding. Any time, if the customer demand exceeds the service availability, a waiting line forms.

We wait in lines at the hospital, at the bank, at a grocery store, etc. Waiting time depends on the number of people waiting before you, the number of service providers, and the amount of service time for each individual customer. Customers can be either humans or objects such as customer orders to be processed.

The elements of a queue—

1. Arrivals that need service of some kind,
2. Service facilities that take care of the arrivals,
3. The queue, where the arrivals wait until they can be served.

Queuing Discipline:

Queuing discipline describes the manner in which the people are served after a queue is formed.

FIFO – First In First Out
LIFO – Last In First Out

SIRO – Service In Random Order

Contact's behavior:

➤ **Balking**—A contact may leave the queue, if there is no waiting space.

➤ **Priorities**—In certain applications some contacts are served before others, regardless of their order of arrival.

Eg: As in the emergency department, patients with life-threatening injuries will be attended to before others

➤ **Jockeying**—contacts may jump from one waiting line to another

➤ **Reneging**—When a patient is waiting in a queue, he may decide to forgo the service because he does not wish to wait any longer. This phenomenon, called reneging, is an important characteristic of many health care systems.

The probability that a patient reneges usually increases with the queue length and the patient's estimation of how long he must wait to be served.

Patient Flow Management:

1. **Appointments:**
Appointments can be made over the phone and in person, Compared to systems without

appointments, systems with appointments reduce the arrival variability and waiting time at the facility. Also, they do not occupy space in the facility's waiting rooms.

2. **Arrival-Check-in**

When patients arrive, they can register by using their existing ID or with a new ID.

3. **Directions**

Visual messages like name boards and exit boards, will give direction to arrivals

4. **Active Waiting**

Patients may feel waiting times are shorter if they are informed. This is called "Active Waiting". This ensures that the patients are in-process, so that the patient flow is constant.

Four main things which reduce 80% of waiting time:

- Registration time Management
- Sufficient Doctors
- Sufficient Counter Staff
- Record maintenance

Proper record management and good filing system will reduce the search time.

— Ms. D. Saranya

Volunteering

I came to Madurai through Travellers Worldwide in August. They organized a great place for me to live with unbeatable ground support and a wonderful placement at the Grace Kennett Home where I will be helping until January.

I love being part of the close-knit team under Elizabeth, the Chief Nurse, who cares for the children. I arrive at 8am and soon after the older children go to school, we start the routine of feeding, bathing and dressing the remaining children.

Whichever part of this process I am involved in, I hope I am useful; certainly I enjoy it. The rest of the morning, the other volunteers and I play with the children. This is demanding but rewarding.

The children currently range from 3 days to 3 years old, each having their own personality, and it is a joy to participate in their lives. I am uplifted by their greetings in the morning and the challenges this work involve is more than balanced by the pleasure it brings. I am happy to be able to offer them some love and attention, which is what any child



needs. I feel very fortunate to have had this experience and to be part of this wonderful organization. It has changed my life and I hope I have been of some small benefit to the children and that I can continue to contribute once I return to England.

— Ms. Stephanie Coxon

Importance of Food Hygiene

Every day people all over the world get sick from the food they eat. This sickness is called foodborne disease and is caused by dangerous microorganisms and/or toxic chemicals. Most of the foodborne diseases are preventable with proper food handling.

Foodborne Disease:

- ▶ Is a strain on health care systems;
- ▶ Severely affects infants, young children, elderly and the sick;
- ▶ Creates a vicious cycle of diarrhoea and malnutrition; and
- ▶ Hurts the national economy and development and international trade.

Unsafe food has been a human health problem since history was

first recorded, and many food safety problems encountered today are not new. To improve the safety of the food supply, the occurrence of food borne disease remains a significant health hazard.

It has been estimated that each year 1.8 million people die as a result of diarrhoeal diseases and most of these cases can be attributed to contaminated food or water. Proper food preparation can prevent most foodborne diseases.

Microorganisms are not the only cause of foodborne illness. People also get sick from poisonous chemicals, which include:

- ▶ Natural toxins;
- ▶ Metals and environmental pollutants;
- ▶ Chemicals used for treating animals;

- ▶ Improperly used pesticides;
- ▶ Chemicals used for cleaning; and
- ▶ Improperly used food additives.

Simple measures such as washing and peeling may reduce the risk from chemicals that are found on the surface of foods.

Appropriate storage can avoid or reduce the formation of some natural toxins.

Wash your hands before handling food and often during food preparation.

Wash your hands after going to the toilet.

Wash and sanitize all surfaces and equipment used for food preparation.

Protect kitchen areas and food from insects, pests and other animals.

— Mr. V. Krishnan

Humour Corner

One day a man goes to a pet shop to buy a parrot. The assistant takes the man to the parrot section and asks the man to choose one. The man asks, "How much is the yellow one?"

The assistant says, "Rs.1 Lakh."

The man is shocked and asks the assistant why it's so expensive. The assistant explains, "This parrot is a very special one. He knows typewriting and can type really fast."

"What about the green one?" the man asks.

The assistant says, "He costs Rs.2 Lakh because he knows typewriting and can answer incoming telephone calls and takes notes."

"What about the red one?" the man asks.

The assistant says, "That one's Rs.10 Lakh."

The man says, "What does HE do?"

The assistant says, "I don't know, but the other two call him Boss."

A scientist and a philosopher were being chased by a hungry lion. The scientist made some quick calculations, he said, "It's no good trying to outrun it, it's catching up."

The philosopher kept a little ahead and replied, "I am not trying to outrun the lion, I am trying to outrun you!"

A couple of hunters are out in the woods when one of them falls to the ground. He doesn't seem to be breathing, his eyes are rolled back in his head.

The other man whips out his cell phone and calls the emergency services. He gasps to the operator: "My friend is dead! What can I do?"

The operator, in a calm soothing voice says: "Just take it easy. I can help. First, let's make sure he's dead." There is a silence, then a shot is heard.

The man's voice comes back on the line. He says: "OK, now what?"

PHOTO GALLERY

