



# When Translation is a Pain

Health and Safety Advice for Translators

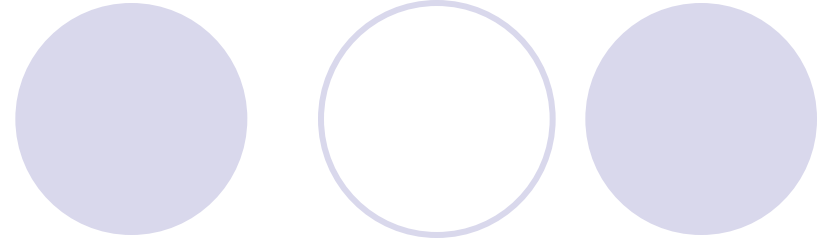
Yuno Dinnie MITI  
ITI Japanese Network

# Translation – Bad for Your Health?

- Sedentary
- Repetitive
- Intense
- Stressful



# What is RSI?



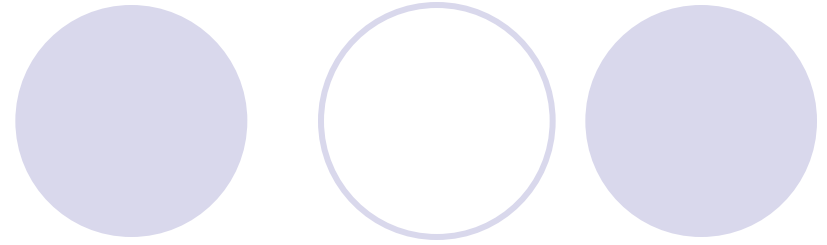
- **Repetitive Strain Injury**
- 反復性過勞障害
- Also called:



# What is RSI?

- **Repetitive Strain Injury**
- 反復性過勞障害
- Also called:
  - CTD (cumulative trauma disorders)
  - OOS (occupational overuse syndrome)
  - MSD ((work-related) musculoskeletal disorders)
  - WRULD (work-related upper limb disorders)
  - 頸肩腕症候群/頸肩腕障害

# What is RSI?



- Umbrella term covering:

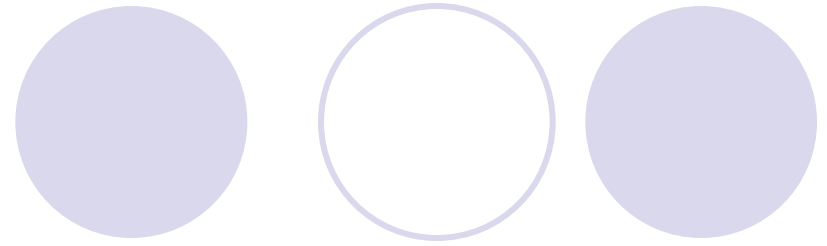


# What is RSI?

- **Umbrella term covering:**
  - Specific conditions (soft tissue injuries) such as CTS (carpal tunnel syndrome) and tenosynovitis (腱鞘炎)
  - Non-specific/diffuse pain



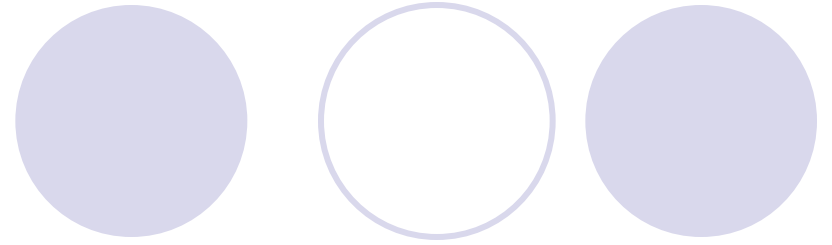
# What is RSI?



- RSI can affect:



# What is RSI?



- RSI can affect:
  - Neck
  - Shoulders
  - Upper back
  - Upper arms
  - Elbows
  - Forearms
  - Wrists
  - Thumbs/fingers



A decorative graphic at the top of the slide consists of two groups of three circles. The first group on the left has a solid light purple circle on the left, a white circle with a light purple outline in the middle, and a solid light purple circle on the right. The second group on the right has a solid light purple circle on the left, a white circle with a light purple outline in the middle, and a solid light purple circle on the right.

# Symptoms

- Persistent pain (dull, achy, electric, stabbing...)
- Weakness and loss of function (e.g. grip)
- Tingling (pins and needles)
- Numbness
- Tenderness
- Swelling or feeling of swelling
- Crackling/creaking during movement
- Muscle spasms
- Restriction or loss of movement

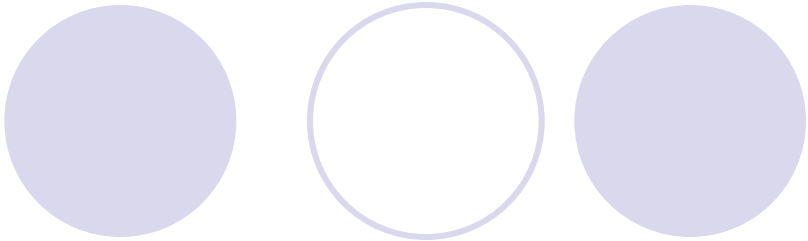
# Warning signs



- Persistent feeling of fatigue/weakness/heaviness
- Cold hands
- Reluctance to use hands or carry things
- Hands trembling or stiff after use
- Tingling, numbness or loss of sensation
- Soreness or pain



# Risk factors

- 
- Predisposition
  - Repetition
  - Static loading
  - Posture
  - Badly designed workstation/tool
  - Stress / Lack of control
  - Insufficient rest

# European Directive



- **Council Directive 90/270/EEC:**  
The minimum safety and health requirements for work with display screen equipment

# European Directive



- Employers' obligations

# European Directive



- Employers' obligations
  - Workstation assessment & adjustment
    - Minimum requirements defined regarding equipment & environment
  - Information & training regarding equipment
  - Daily work routine incorporating regular breaks
  - Worker consultation & participation regarding health & safety issues
  - Eye/eyesight protection

# European Directive



- Employers' obligations

- Workstation assessment & adjustment

- Minimum requirements defined regarding equipment & environment

- Information & training regarding equipment

- Daily work routine incorporating regular breaks

- Worker consultation & participation regarding health & safety issues

- Eye/eyesight protection

- ...But as a freelancer, you are responsible for your own safety and health

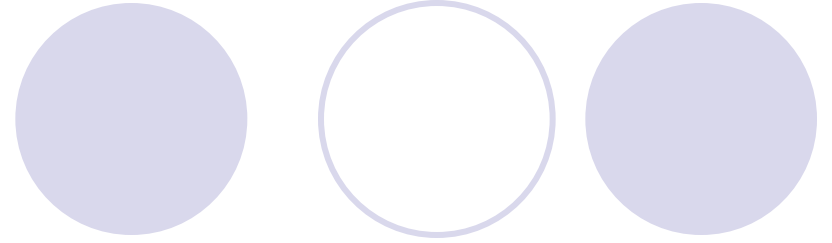
# RSI – Keys to Prevention



- Workstation setup
- Input device options
- Work habit & lifestyle

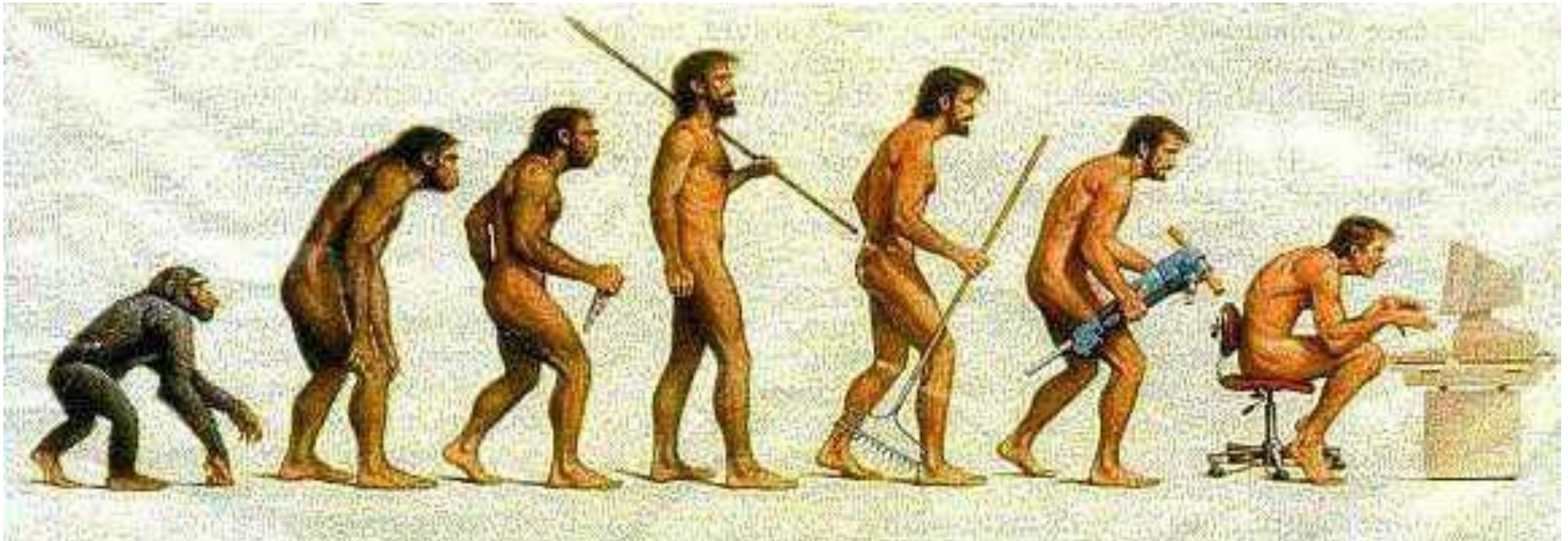


Workstation setup



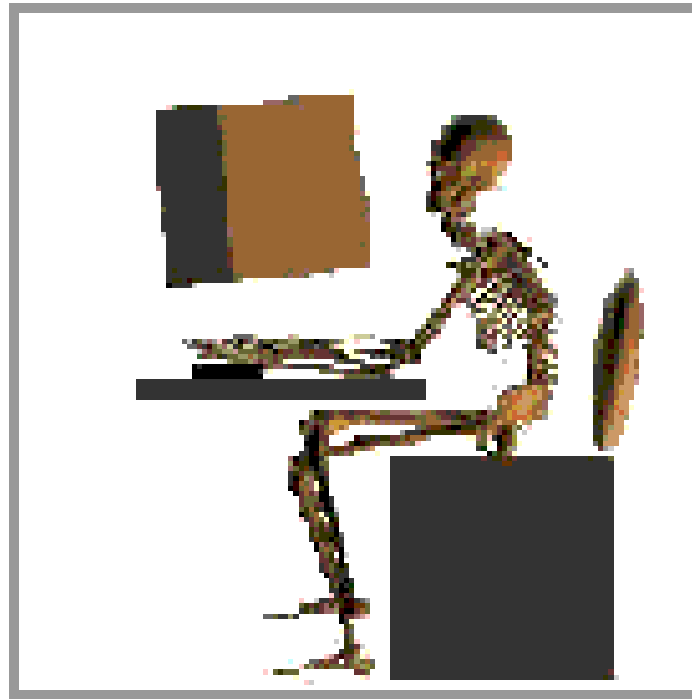
# Workstation setup

- Evolution:  
Somewhere, something went terribly wrong.



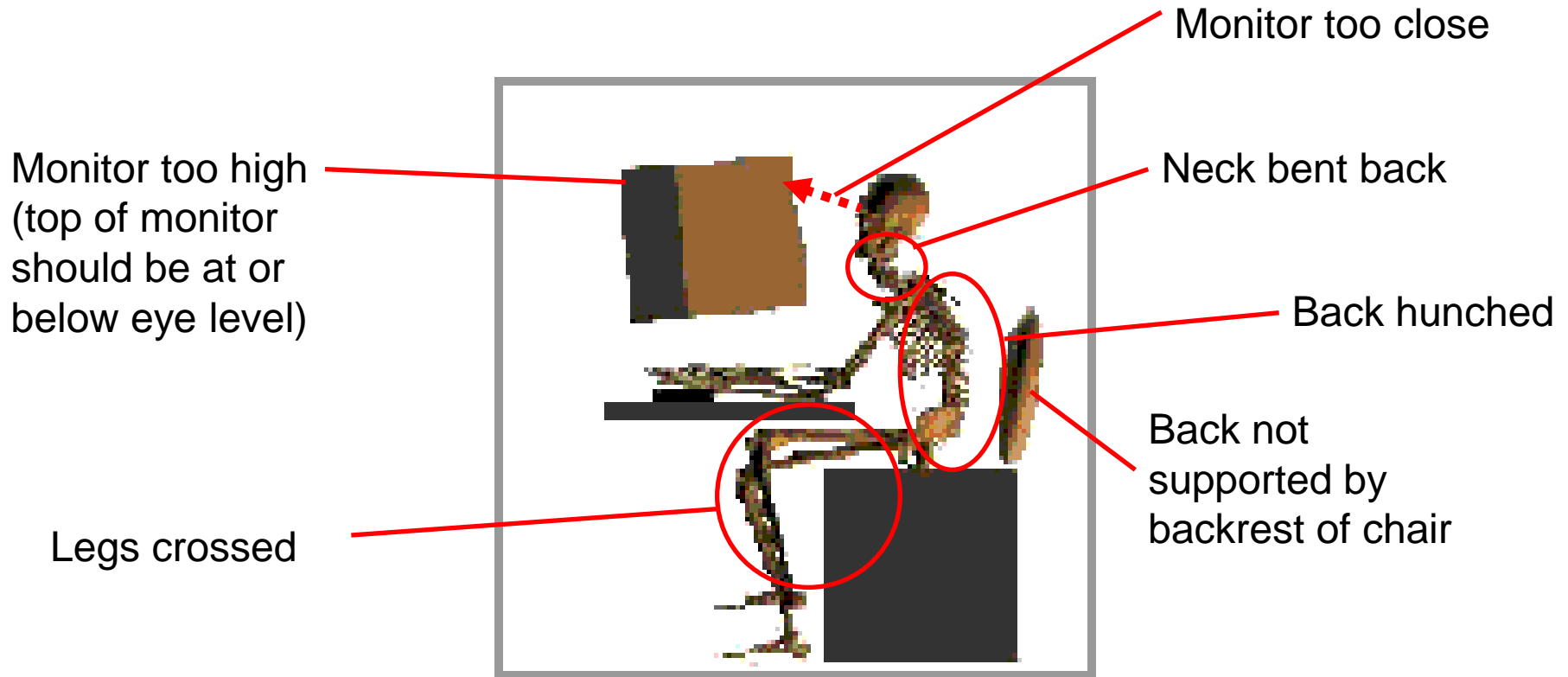
<http://www.sinz.org/Michael.Sinz/Evolution.html>

# Workstation setup



<http://www.physiotherapy.co.uk/exercises/workstation/correctposition.shtml>

# Workstation setup



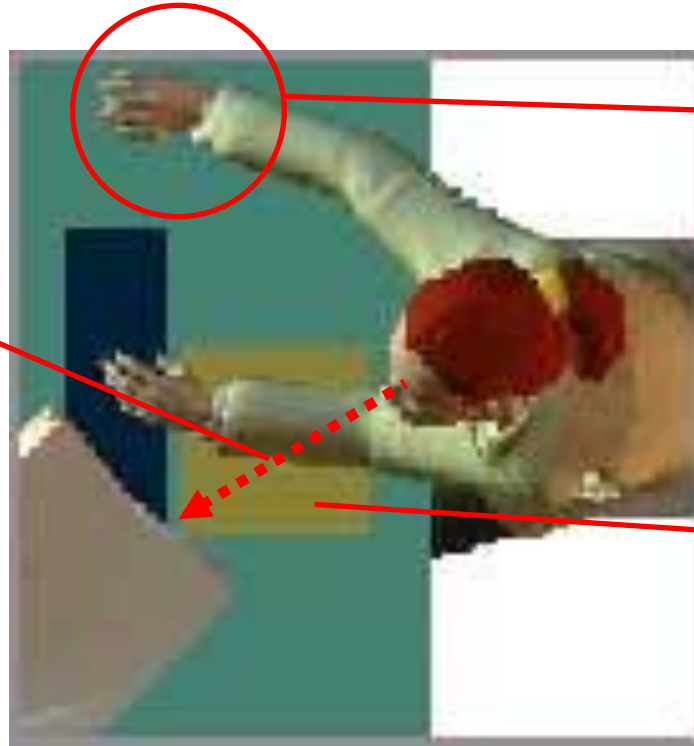
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# Workstation setup



<http://www.physiotherapy.co.uk/exercises/workstation/correctposition.shtml>

# Workstation setup



Mouse placed too far  
– having to reach out

Monitor not placed  
straight in front –  
having to twist neck

Keyboard pushed  
away to accommodate  
document

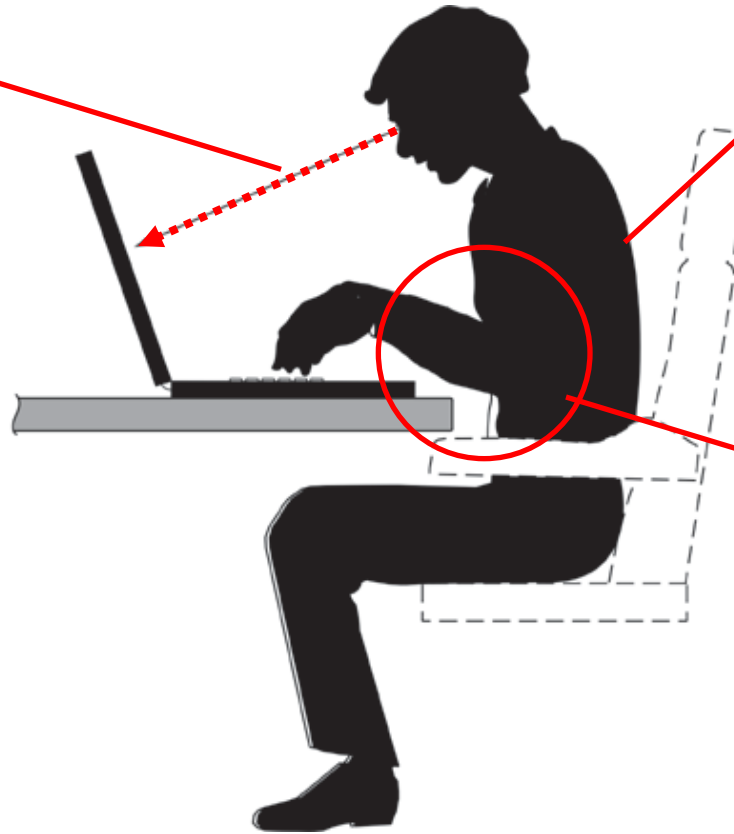
# Workstation setup



[http://www.laptop-ergonomics.com/carpal\\_tunnel\\_laptop.htm](http://www.laptop-ergonomics.com/carpal_tunnel_laptop.htm)

# Workstation setup

Screen too low –  
having to bend  
neck down



Back hunched and  
not supported by  
backrest

Keyboard too high –  
having to bend  
elbows too tightly



# Workstation setup



- **Desk & chair – key points to consider**
  - Height – writing vs. typing
  - Foot rest
  - Back rest with lumbar support
  - How adjustable is your chair?
  - Arms or no arms?

# Input device options



- There's no such thing as "ergonomic" office products!
- Human body is not designed for computer work
- Any device can harm you if used for many hours without any break

# Input device options

- Keyboards

# Input device options

- Keyboards
- Contoured



# Input device options

- **Keyboards**
  - Contoured
  - Split



# Input device options

- **Keyboards**
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  - Dvorak



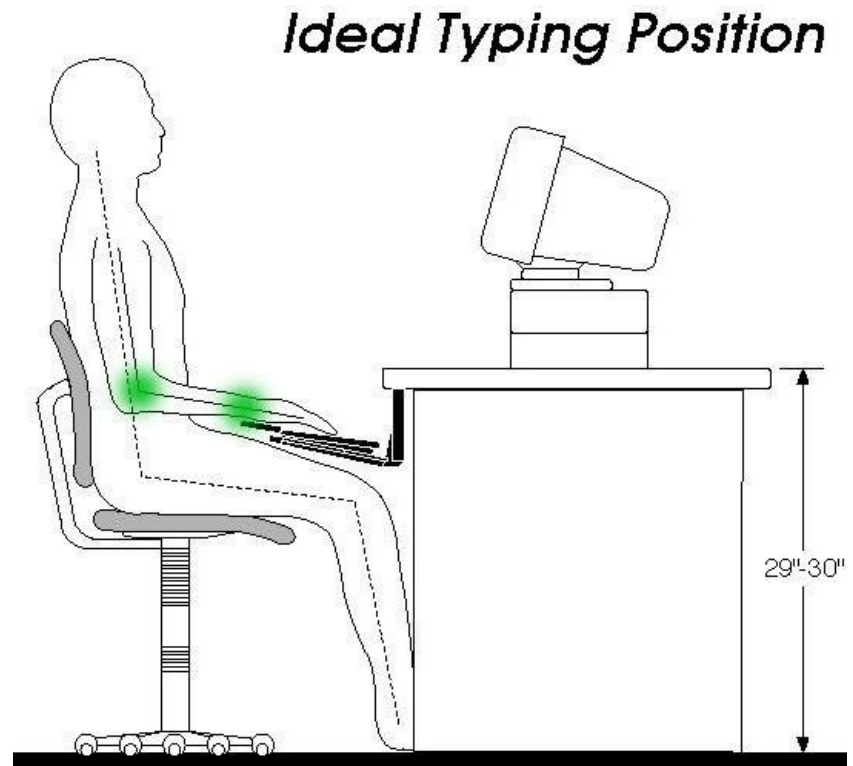
# Input device options

- **Keyboards**
  - Contoured
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  - Dvorak
  - Narrow  
(no numeric pad)



# Input device options

- **Keyboards**
  - Contoured
  - Split
  - Dvorak
  - Narrow  
(no numeric pad)
- **Negative tilt tray**





# Input device options

- Mice and mouse alternatives

# Input device options

- Mice and mouse alternatives
- Keyboard shortcuts

## Windows system key combinations

- F1: Help
- CTRL+ESC: Open Start menu
- ALT+TAB: Switch between open programs
- ALT+F4: Quit program
- SHIFT+DELETE: Delete item permanently

## Windows program key combinations

- CTRL+C: Copy
- CTRL+X: Cut
- CTRL+V: Paste
- CTRL+Z: Undo
- CTRL+B: Bold
- CTRL+U: Underline
- CTRL+I: Italic

See <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/126449/> for more shortcuts

# Input device options

- Mice and mouse alternatives
  - Keyboard shortcuts
  - Trackball



# Input device options

- Mice and mouse alternatives
  - Keyboard shortcuts
  - Trackball
  - Touch pad / Tablet



# Input device options

- **Mice and mouse alternatives**

- Keyboard shortcuts

- Trackball

- Touch pad / Tablet

- Vertical mouse



# Input device options - Software

- Break Reminder – break timer
- Mousetool (Quill Nib) – mouse clicker
- RSiGuard
  - break timer/mouse clicker/stretch video
- Desk Doctor
  - RSI tester/break timer/stretch video
- Dragon NaturallySpeaking
  - speech recognition
- TM as ergonomic aid?

# Work habit / lifestyle

The title is positioned to the left of a horizontal row of five circles. The circles alternate in style: a solid light purple circle, a hollow light purple circle, a solid light purple circle, a hollow light purple circle, and a solid light purple circle.

- Take breaks & get up
- Stretch



# Work habit / lifestyle

- Posture-improving exercise:



# Work habit / lifestyle



- Posture-improving exercise:
  - Pilates
  - Yoga
  - Tai chi
  - Qigong
  - Alexander technique

# Work habit / lifestyle



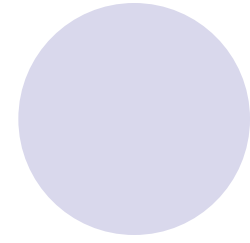
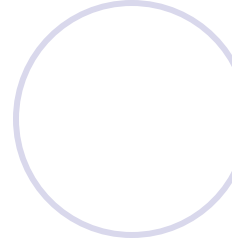
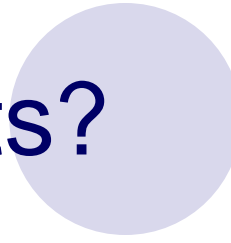
- General exercise
  - Walk
  - Run
  - Swim
  - Dance
  - Gym
  - Active lifestyle
- Healthy diet
- Relax / Sleep



# Final words

- Prevention is better than cure
- ... and good for your general health and wellbeing too!

Questions/comments?





# Personal experience

- RSI sufferer since 1980
- Started translation in 1990
- Operation on right arm in 1995
- Both arms affected since 2000
- Career saved by speech recognition software
- Life changes include giving up driving and moving house
- Still battling pains and flare-ups



# Key points

- Chronic RSI is difficult to treat – major lifestyle changes are required to manage the condition
- Prevention is better than cure