

Is your laptop a pain in the neck?

By *srlinuxx*

Created 31/05/2005 - 2:59pm

Submitted by srlinuxx on Tuesday 31st of May 2005 02:59:44 PM Filed under [Hardware](#) [1]

When Ram Viswanadha began using a laptop at work, he decided to shelve his clunky old desktop PC for good. The notebook's size, speed and memory blew the older computer away.

What the 30-year-old Silicon Valley software engineer didn't bargain for was a severe case of repetitive strain injury--and a three-month disability leave--from hunching over his laptop day in and day out for four years.

Viswanadha's situation is a worst case scenario in workplace ergonomics, but stories like his are becoming more common, according to doctors and ergonomic experts across the country. As people ditch desktop computers to work full time on laptops, doctors expect to see a lot more pains, strains and injuries among white collar workers.

"When you look at the design, laptops were never (meant) as a replacement for a desktop computer," said Alan Hedge, director of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Laboratory at Cornell University. "The idea was portability for occasional use. It was never intended to be a machine you would work at for eight hours a day, 52 weeks a year."

Statistical information on injuries related to notebook computer use is scarce, but doctors report a steady stream of new patients who've overdone it on the machines. That's not surprising given the boom in laptop sales. Nearly 49 million notebooks were sold in 2004 worldwide, almost double the number sold in 2000, according to market researcher IDC. The devices account for more than a quarter of the computer market, and are set to surpass desktop sales in the United States by 2008, IDC said.

The main problem with laptops is that the screen and keyboard are so close together. Without the aid of peripherals, laptop users have two choices, neither of which would win them any points for posture. They can cramp their neck down to view the monitor or they can elevate the machine to eye level, which can wreak havoc on shoulders and arms.

[Full Article](#) [2].

[Hardware](#)

Source URL: <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/1143>

Links:

[1] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/39>

[2] http://news.zdnet.com/2100-9595_22-5723559.html