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**Disclaimer:** The instructions and advice presented in this software and documentation are in no way intended as a substitute for medical counseling. Consult your physician before under taking any exercise program. Discontinue the RELAXIZE exercises and consult a physician if you experience pain while doing the exercises. The developers of the software and its distributors are not liable for any injury or health impairments that occur to any person using the exercises suggested in the software.

## Contents Using RELAXIZE for Windows

### What is RELAXIZE for Windows?

RELAXIZE for Windows is a tool for helping to prevent computer injuries, such as Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. If properly installed, RELAXIZE will automatically begin running when you start Windows. RELAXIZE will run in the "background" as you work with other applications.

A small dialog box will appear in the lower right corner of the screen when it is time for a break. Select the Yes button to begin exercises or the No button to continue working. RELAXIZE includes ten exercise windows which appear during break time. Each exercise window contains exercises for reducing stress and strain on the body caused by working at a computer for long time periods.

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### Re-Start RELAXIZE

RELAXIZE will automatically start running in the "background" when Windows begins running. You can exit from RELAXIZE and later re-start the program. Open the StartUp group window and double-click on the RELAXIZE icon. RELAXIZE will start running in the "background" again.

## **RELAXIZE Menu Bar**

### File Menu Command

#### **Start Exercises**

Manually start RELAXIZE exercises before scheduled exercise break begins.

#### **Exit**

Exit from RELAXIZE program. RELAXIZE will stop running in the "background" until restarted.

### Options Menu Commands

#### **Set Timers**

Display window for changing posture, work and break timer settings.

#### **Start Times**

Display window to set exercise break time schedule.

#### **Exercise Windows**

Recommended exercises for relaxing and relieving stress.

#### **Sound**

Turn RELAXIZE beeper on and off.

### Help Menu Commands

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#### **About RELAXIZE**

Copyright information about RELAXIZE.

## **Choose a Command**

### Mouse

1. Point to a menu title and click. The menu window will appear.
2. Point to a command and click.

### Keyboard

1. Press ALT and the underlined letter of a menu title. The menu window will appear.
2. Press the underlined letter of a command or use the UP and DOWN arrow keys and press ENTER to choose the highlighted command.

## Set Timers

When you install RELAXIZE, default timer values are installed for the posture window ( 1 minute), work period timer (60 minutes) and break period timer (5 minutes). The posture timer tells RELAXIZE how long to display the posture exercise window. The work timer determines how long RELAXIZE runs in the background while work. The relax timer determines the length of your break time.

We recommend you use the default timer values to help prevent injuries. However, you can change the timer values while RELAXIZE is running.

1. Choose Set Timers from the Options menu.
2. Point and click or press TAB to move cursor to timer field you want to reset.
3. Change the timer value by editing the field or use the spin buttons to the right of each timer field. Point to the UP arrow and click to increase the timer value. Point to the DOWN arrow and click to decrease the timer value.
4. Select the Save button to save the new timer settings and return to the RELAXIZE menu.

Select the Cancel button to cancel new timer settings and/or return to the RELAXIZE menu.

**Note:** Exercise Start Times will override the work period timer.

## **Control Menu**

### Open the RELAXIZE Control Menu

#### **Mouse**

Point to the Control Menu box in the upper-left corner of the window and click.  
Do not double-click or you will close the window.

#### **Keyboard**

Press ALT and SPACEBAR.

### Control Menu Commands

#### **Restore**

Returns the window to its previous size and position before it was maximized to full size or minimized to an icon.

#### **Move**

Allows the window to be moved to another position on the screen. When you choose Move a four directional arrow pointer appears. Use the mouse or arrow keys to move the window, then release the mouse button or press ENTER.

#### **Size**

Allows you to change the size of the window. When you choose Size a four directional arrow pointer appears. Use the mouse or arrow keys to change the window's size, then release the mouse button or press ENTER.

#### **Minimize**

Reduces the window to an icon.

#### **Maximize**

Enlarges the window to full screen.

#### **Close**

Closes window and exits from RELAXIZE.

## Exercise Windows

### Select Exercise Windows

RELAXIZE includes ten exercise windows that can appear during break periods. The exercise time remaining for each window is displayed in the status bar located at the bottom of the window.

RELAXIZE defaults to displaying each exercise window consecutively during break time. We recommend you display each exercise window during break time to help prevent injuries. You can choose which exercise window(s) not to display. However, you cannot change the order exercise windows are displayed.

1. Choose Exercise Windows from the Option menu. The exercise window list will appear.

A check mark to the left of the exercise window name indicates that the window will be displayed during break time. No check mark indicates the window will not be displayed.

2. Point and click to remove or place a check mark next to an exercise window name. Keyboard users can use the arrow keys to highlight an exercise window name and press ENTER to remove or place a check mark. At least one exercise window must be displayed during break time.

**Note:** RELAXIZE uses the break period timer settings and the number of exercise windows marked for display to calculate the length of time each exercise window is displayed.

## **Contents for Computer Injury Health Effects**

The majority of people diagnosed with repetitive strain injuries, such as Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, are performing repetitive tasks in the workplace or home involving the use of hands and fingers. During the past decade the number of computer related injuries has increased dramatically.

Expanding computer use has caused concerns about the health effects. Employees are complaining about eye strain, headaches, stress and neck, back and arm pain. These health effects are having a negative effect not only on employee morale and productivity, but with home computer users as well.

Costs

Causes

Frequency

Symptoms

Prevention

For more information on computer injuries you can contact OSHA:

Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
U. S. Department of Labor  
Technical Data Center, Room N2439  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20210

## Costs

Computer injury costs increased substantially during the last ten years. Disability benefit expenditures (including workmen's compensation premiums) are increasing 7% annually.

One cost study suggests that computer injury costs may represent 8% of labor costs:

3.5% direct

3.5% hidden (production lost)

1.0% management

-----

8.0% of payroll

U.S. disability cost in 1986 was \$87.3 billion paid to employees instead of wages. \$80 billion for medical expenditures and \$2.7 billion for rehabilitation. \$170 billion is total amount paid by private sector. (4% of GNP)

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) injuries are included in a broader category called "motion injuries". Motion injuries may comprise 50% of workmen's compensation cases by the year 2000. ( Business Week 1/89)

National Institute for Occupation Safety and Health Administration (NIOSH) estimates that an average CTS case costs \$3000 in benefits and up to \$40,000 in direct medical costs. A severe CTS case can cost \$100,000 in medical and administrative and lost productivity.

## Causes

Today's computer users work at the keyboard for hours at a time never varying their activity or body position. Human bodies are not meant to remain in a sedentary position, nor is the hand designed for repetitive movements without rest.

Repeated stressful motions, and extension of the wrists in the same position for long periods of time may cause enlarged tendons and chronic irritation of the median nerve. The problem develops when the same limited assortment of tasks are done repeatedly day in and day out.

Poor posture compounded by use of poorly designed furniture. Improper keyboard height and position may cause wrist, neck and shoulder stress.

Low quality computer monitors may flicker making it difficult for the eyes to focus. Display screen glare from improper positioning and improper lighting also contribute to eye strain.

Pregnancy can result in and/or exacerbate Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. Water retention will cause pain. Symptoms usually disappear after delivery of the child.

## Frequency

Approximately 26,000 Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) operations are done each year. Business Week (1/89) reports that injuries rose from 20,000 in 1983 to 74,000 in 1987.

In 1986 the U.S. Department of Labor estimated that about 600,000 computer related jobs were at risk for CTS. Bureau of Labor Statistics - 61% of occupational illness in 1991 were computer injuries. In 1982 the figure was 21%. U.S. Department of Labor says CTS and other cumulative trauma disorders cause 48% of industrial work place illnesses. The disease affects over 5 million Americans.

CTS injuries have tripled in the last 10 years according to PC World Magazine. CTS is the number one worker complaint to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

In 1992, 56% of illnesses reported to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) were computer injuries. This compares with 18% in 1981 and 28% in 1984. The dramatic rise coincides with the proliferation of personal computer use.

### Carpal Tunnel

The carpal tunnel is a narrow tunnel in the wrist formed by ligament and bone. The median nerve, which carries impulses from the brain to the hand, passes through the carpal tunnel, along with the tendons that enable the hand to close. When stressed, the tendons swell inside the tunnel and compress the median nerve. CTS affects the sensitive nerves and the blood supply that feeds the hands and wrists.

CTS impact on American businesses is devastating. The impact shows up in the work place in the form of fatigue, poor work performance, discomfort and pain, and poor employer/employee relations.

The high cost of treatment and lost productivity when the employee is absent for a long period, drains the company's ability to operate efficiently. This can lead to more problems when other employees have to takeover the absent workers responsibilities.

## Symptoms

Repetitive strain injury symptoms typically begin slowly and are mistaken for something else. A person's hands or wrists may feel tired or sore. These symptoms may appear after work or later at night after going to bed. During sleep, blood may collect in the small blood vessels feeding the damaged hand tissue. This situation will cause swelling.

Weakness and/or clumsiness of the hand, faulty sensation in the area strengthen by the median nerve. Pain, numbness and weakness of the hand if not treated, i.e. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome can result in partial or complete disability of the hand according to the Center for Disease Control.

Numbness usually begins in the muscle below the thumb. Frequently pain occurs at night during sleep. Many times there is no sign of bruising or visible swelling. Some days the individual feels fine and other days there is severe discomfort.

In addition, stiff neck and back muscles may result from poor posture caused by compensating for other areas of stress.

Visual problems such as eye strain and irritation or lost focus are among the most frequently reported complaints.

Consult a physician if you are experiencing these symptoms.

## Prevention

Give hands frequent rests during heavy activity periods. Taking a break every 30 minutes can reduce muscle tension and improve productivity. Use RELAXIZE to develop the habit of frequent breaks.

Computer operators should stretch frequently, moving head, neck, shoulders and arms briefly to balance muscle tension. Individuals should be seated properly. Work should be placed slightly behind and to the side of the keyboard at a comfortable reading distance and at a proper height to prevent a stoop-shouldered position.

Progressive muscle relaxation - sit comfortably; tense and relax the muscle groups of the shoulders, neck and back until you can identify when they are tense; then let your back, neck and shoulders go limp and concentrate on remaining relaxed for several minutes. It may take a few weeks or more to master this relaxation procedure.

Your chair must provide proper support in relation to the typing surface, monitor height and floor surface for resting feet. The wrist needs to be kept in an unbent position. Key-board level should be checked so that the arms are parallel to the floor.

The computer screen should be positioned at proper eye level. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Administration (NIOSH) recommends that the monitor be positioned 20-24 inches away from your face. The top of the screen should be a bit below your horizontal line of sight: 5-15 degrees is comfortable for most people's necks. If a vision problem causes you to strain your neck, consult your eye-care specialist about getting the proper glasses.

Eye strain can be reduced by arranging the workstation to avoid screen glare and improve lighting. NIOSH recommends taking a 15-minute break after 2 hours of continuous work under moderate visual demands and a 15-minute break after 1 hour of continuous work under high visual demands. Lighting should be adequate for the computer user to see the text and screen, but not so bright as to cause glare.

Above all else use common sense and recognize the potential for injury.

## Ergonomics

Ergonomics is the study and design of work environments that promote comfortable and safe work.

We tend to adapt ourselves to work conditions imposed by computers, rather than use workstations that meet our body's needs. Our eyes strain while focusing at the screen, our necks and backs strain by sitting in unnatural positions for hours. We suffer arm and hand injuries caused by repetitive motions. Many negative health effects can be avoided by taking simple measures.

Five keys to reducing computer related health problems are:

- a. Recognize that injury may occur with work requiring repetitive movements
- b. Develop and maintain good posture habits
- c. Take regular rest periods
- d. Use ergonomic furniture
- e. Proper lighting

A poorly designed workstation may cause stress to different areas of the body. Correcting ergonomic problems means changing work habits and rearranging the workstation or replacing furniture.

The following products will help prevent health problems:

1. RELAXIZE for Windows
2. Anti-glare VDT screen
3. Keyboard wristpads
4. Mouse wristpad or a trackball
5. Document holder
6. Adjustable chair
7. Computer desk with keyboard tray
8. Telephone Headset

## **Workstation Design**

Individuals must have adequate work space to do the required job tasks. Body size will influence chair design, work surface height and access to various workstation elements, such as the display screen.

RELAXIZE is a software product designed to make it easy to take a break. It silently monitors computer use and reminds the individual to stop and rest.

### Desk

An adjustable work surface will help provide adequate leg room for the individual to stretch out. Stretching will relieve static load that results from sitting with the legs in a fixed position for long periods. Desks should provide for the keyboard and mouse to be located at a height where the forearms are parallel to the floor while sitting.

### Chair

Most computer users spend their time sitting. A chair that properly fits the individual will provide adequate back and shoulder support to reduce fatigue.

### Chair Height

Chair height is correct when the entire sole of the foot can rest on the floor or footrest and the back of the knee is slightly higher than the seat of the chair. This position allows the blood to circulate freely in the legs and feet.

### Monitor/VDT

The monitor should be located in front of you at eye level and within an arms length. Position the document holder close and at the same level as the monitor to help reduce neck tension. Prevent glare by positioning the monitor to minimize reflections. Use a flicker free monitor and make use of the brightness and contrast controls.

### Keyboards, mouse, wrist pads

Keep the keyboard flat to prevent wrist extension. Locate the keyboard at the same level or lower than the level of the elbow. Don't strain fingers to reach keys, move the entire arm. Use wristpads only to relax on when not typing. Hold the mouse loosely. Use a mouse which doesn't require excessive finger pressure to operate.

### Telephone Headset

Use the headset to prevent the stress associated with cradling the phone between the neck and shoulder.

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## **Trademark**

RELAXIZE is a trademark of Changing Seasons Software, Ltd.

Microsoft is registered trademark and Windows is a trademark of Microsoft Corporation.

## Technical Support

We have tried to design RELAXIZE for easy use. Still, we will be happy to help if you encounter a problem. Contact us by one of the following methods:

Telephone (608) 273-2739

Telephone contact is probably the best way to solve a problem. It is easier to provide help when we can speak with you directly.

Please try to be in front of your computer with the program operating. Diagnosing a software problem is difficult if you are not at the computer.

Fax (608) 273-1965

CompuServe ID number: 71371,731

Write - send correspondence to:

Changing Seasons Software, Ltd.  
4466 Sentinel Pass  
Madison, WI 53711-4725

We would appreciate comments or suggestions you have about RELAXIZE for Windows.

## Start Times

You can set RELAXIZE exercises to start at specific times during your work schedule. For example, if your work schedule is 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, you can set RELAXIZE to start exercises at 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM and 3:00 PM. Exercise start times override the work period timer.

### Set Exercise Start Time

Choose Start Times from the Options menu.

#### Mouse

Point and click on the start time you want to set for exercises to begin. The click will place an "X" in the box to the right of the start time.

#### Keyboard

Use the TAB key to highlight the start time you want to set. Press the Space Bar to place an "X" in the box to the right of the start time.

An "X" in the box tells RELAXIZE to start the exercises at that time. Follow this same procedure to remove an "X" from the start time box. RELAXIZE will ignore start times with an empty box.

### Add Start Time

1. Move cursor to Edit Time text box.
2. Enter the new time in the format HH:MM and press the TAB key. The AM option button will now be highlighted.
3. Select AM or PM. (Keyboard users can use the arrow keys.)
4. Press TAB to move to the Add button and press ENTER. The new start time will be inserted in the proper position in the start time list. The start time list can contain up to ten different start times. RELAXIZE will not allow you to include more than ten start times.

### Change Start Time

1. Move cursor to Edit Time text box.
2. Enter the new time in the format HH:MM and press the TAB key. The AM option button will now be highlighted.
3. Select AM or PM. (Keyboard users can use the arrow keys.)
4. Select the start time to change.
5. Select the Change button. The start time list will be re-sorted to reflect the time change.

### Delete a Start Time

1. Select a start time to delete.
2. Select the Delete button. The select start time will be removed from the list.

#### Save Start Time Changes

Select the Ok button to save all additions and changes made to the start time list and return to the RELAXIZE menu.

#### Cancel Changes

Select the Cancel button to cancel additions and changes made to the start time list and return to the RELAXIZE menu.

## **Pause Button**

Selecting the Pause button will cause the timer for the currently displayed exercise to pause. The exercise timer will stop counting down the remaining exercise time. Selecting the Pause button again will cause the exercise timer to resume counting down the remaining exercise time.

This feature is helpful for those instances when your exercising is interrupted.

## **Repeat Button**

You can repeat an exercise before it disappears from the screen. Selecting the Repeat button will cause the timer for the currently displayed exercise to reset to the beginning exercise time.

This feature will only repeat the exercise displayed at the time the Repeat button was selected.

## **Continue Button**

You can shorten the time an exercise is displayed by selecting the Continue button. Using the Continue button will display the next exercise window or cause the RELAXIZE menu to disappear (become minimized) when the current exercise window is the last window.

## **Cancel Button**

You can cancel your break and return to work any time before all the exercise windows are displayed. Selecting the Cancel button will cause the current exercise window to disappear and reduce RELAXIZE to an icon. RELAXIZE will begin running in the "background".

## **Start Exercises Before Scheduled Breaks**

You can start an exercise break before it is scheduled by restoring the RELAXIZE menu bar to full screen. See Control Menu instructions for restoring RELAXIZE menu to full screen.

1. Select Start Exercises from the File menu. A small dialog box will appear in the lower right corner of the screen.
2. Select the Yes button. The dialog box will disappear and the first exercise window will appear.

## Uninstall RELAXIZE

Use the following procedure to uninstall RELAXIZE on your computer.

1. Delete the following files:

C:\WINDOWS\RLXSETUP.EXE  
C:\WINDOWS\RELAX.INI  
C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM\SETUPKIT.DLL  
C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM\THREED.VBX  
C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM\SPIN.VBX  
C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM\VBRUN300.DLL  
C:\RELAX\RELAX100.EXE  
C:\RELAX\RELAX100.HLP

2. Delete the RELAXIZE icon and group window.
3. Use a text editor, such as the Windows Notepad program, to change the Load statement in the WIN.INI file.  
Example: load =c:\wntsrman.exe;~~c:\relax\relax100.exe~~  
Delete the characters with the strike through in the example.

## **Screen Savers**

You can use RELAXIZE with Windows' screen savers. However, Windows' screen savers may cause a minor conflict with RELAXIZE. For example, your screen saver may pop-up on the screen while an exercise window is displayed. (Screen savers are normally set to pop-up after a preset time if the keyboard or mouse is not used.) Press a key or move the mouse to have the exercise window reappear.

## Sound

RELAXIZE will beep each time an exercise window appears. This is the program's default setting. The RELAXIZE sound can be turned on and off to accommodate your work situation.

1. Choose Sound from the Option menu.

A check mark to the left of On indicates that the sound is turned on. A check mark to the left of Off indicates that the sound is turned off.

2. Point and click to select On or Off. Keyboard users can use the arrow keys to highlight On or Off and press ENTER.

## References

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