

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION TO EDUCATE LEGISLATORS, HILL STAFFERS ABOUT STAYING HEALTHY WHILE USING NEW TECHNOLOGIES

### *Board Certified Professional Ergonomist to Provide a Demonstration on Capitol Hill in Recognition of October as National Ergonomics Month*

**Bethesda, MD** — Blackberry-itis? Over-texted thumbs? Keyboard usage affecting your back or basketball game? Any of these problems can affect you now—or later—if you use technology in your daily life. And on Capitol Hill, you can't avoid telephones, computers, PDAs and other devices. ***Staying Healthy While Using New Technologies!*** is intended to increase awareness of and educate legislators, staff, and the general public about ergonomics and its impact on everyday living, especially in the workplace. The demonstration, sponsored by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), will take place on Monday, October 5 from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. in 1302 Longworth in recognition of National Ergonomics Month in October.

"In developing this presentation," said Dr. Karen Jacobs, EdD, OTR/L, CPE, a board certified professional ergonomist, occupational therapy practitioner, former AOTA president and Boston University professor, "we have focused on effective ergonomics strategies to promote optimal workplace efficiency while at the same time decreasing stress and common injuries that can occur with continued use of new technologies."

Several handouts—including information on PDAs, computers and computer accessories—have been prepared as part of this presentation that will provide participants with constructive and practical ergonomic strategies to accommodate for new technologies. The presentation will also provide exercises and activities to reinforce the handouts. Some example tips include:

Preventing "Blackberry thumb":

- Use abbreviations when text messaging and typing e-mails.
- Type on handheld devices for no more than ten-minute sessions.
- Try to avoid typing with your thumbs, and use other fingers to type.

Proper keyboard use:

- Use a downward tilting keyboard tray (with no more than a 15° tilt).
- Open or fixed keyboards are better ergonomically than standard keyboards.
- Don't use a wrist rest!

*If you plan to attend as a member of the media, please contact AOTA media relations manager Heather R. Huhman at [praota@aota.org](mailto:praota@aota.org) or (301) 652-6611 x 2963.*

Founded in 1917, the **American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)** represents the professional interests and concerns of more than 140,000 occupational therapists, assistants and students nationwide. The Association educates the public and advances the profession of occupational therapy by providing resources, setting standards including accreditations and serving as an advocate to improve health care. Based in Bethesda, Md., AOTA's major programs and activities are directed toward promoting the professional development of its members and assuring consumer access to quality services so patients can maximize their individual potential. For more information, go to [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org).