Laboratory Chairs and Stools

Physical Design

➢ Most work requires some mobility, in which case wheels or casters are recommended. They also have the advantage of moving easily to provide space to walk between benches and chairs.
  
  o Use hard casters for soft floors and soft casters for hard floors.

➢ For tasks requiring frequent sideways movements, the seat should swivel.

➢ The chair or stool should be height-adjustable to ensure comfort and compatibility with other furniture or equipment in the space.
  
  o If the chair or stool has a single piston hydraulic base with wheels then it must have five legs for stability (not four).

Materials and Surface Coverings

➢ Cleanable, non-absorbent, and resistant to scratches, stains, moisture, chemicals, heat, impact, repeated decontamination, and high pressure washing if required.

➢ Urethane or vinyl are acceptable.

➢ Wood should only be used when it is sealed properly to prevent the absorption of liquid contamination.

Condition

➢ Height-adjustments are functional so as not to negatively affect ergonomics.

➢ Wheels are not missing to prevent a tipping hazard.

➢ Surfaces remain intact and cleanable.

Ergonomics

➢ For work requiring extended periods in a seated position, consider an ergonomic assessment to help prevent repetitive strain injuries or other musculoskeletal disorders.

➢ For an ergonomic assessment visit the EH&S website for more information and the referral form.
Considerations for the selection of chairs and stools in a lab setting:

- Washable, non-absorbent, adjustable, wheels, five legs
- Washable, non-absorbent, non-adjustable, wheels, four legs
- Cloth covered, adjustable, wheels, four legs, worn wood (seal possibly compromised)
- Washable, non-absorbent, non-adjustable, four legs
- Washable, non-absorbent, adjustable, four legs
- Washable, non-absorbent, adjustable, wheels, five legs

Resources:

2. Ministry of Labour - Ergonomics in the workplace
3. Canada Safety Council - Safe Sitting

Contact:

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Queen’s University
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Environmental Health & Safety - Home | Office of Risk and Safety Services (queensu.ca)