Email Management Best Practices

Your mailbox has a maximum size of 2 GB: as you approach the 2 GB limit you will receive warning messages. When you reach the limit you will not be able to send email. The maximum size of attachments has not changed; it remains 20 MB, which is the UCSF-wide attachment size limit.

Poorly managed mailboxes can impact Exchange server performance for a number of reasons. Please consider the following best practice tips as the size of your mailbox grows.

**Tip #1.** Limit the number of items per folder to less than 3500 items – keeping more than 3500 items in any folder (e.g., your Inbox or Sent Items folders) can cause delays when working in those folders in the form of pop-ups that read “Outlook is retrieving data from the Microsoft Exchange Server.” Instead, use archive folders or create sub-folders to store items in groups of no more than 3500 items. *

**Tip #2.** Use archive folders (.PST files) – moving old items to archive folders shifts the storage and management responsibilities from the Exchange server (shared by many people) to your personal computer (used only by you).*

**Tip #3.** Use multiple archive folders – archive folders perform best when they are less than 1 gigabyte in size with less than 3500 items per sub-folder. * ✓ * See “Outlook 2003; How to Create a .pst” in the How-To’s section on ISU Help and Support web page: [http://www.medschool.ucsf.edu/help/Training/index.aspx](http://www.medschool.ucsf.edu/help/Training/index.aspx)

**Tip #4.** Use Microsoft Outlook’s cached mode – cached mode creates a local copy of your mailbox on your hard drive and only queries the Exchange server to synchronize changes, eliminating most “Outlook is retrieving data” pop-ups. *If you receive or send email containing restrictive, confidential, private or protected data (e-Phi, HIPAA), your computer is required to have data encryption to protect the data saved on your computer’s hard drive.*

**Tip #5.** Disable desktop search software – software like Google Desktop Search and Windows Desktop Search constantly query the Exchange server for updates.

The SOM Exchange server is backed up each day for disaster recovery only. Restoring individual messages or mailboxes is not supported at this time although it may be possible to recover deleted items with Microsoft Outlook’s Recover Deleted Items feature.* ✓ * See “Outlook: How to Recover Deleted items” in the How-To’s section on ISU Help and Support web page: [http://www.medschool.ucsf.edu/help/Training/index.aspx](http://www.medschool.ucsf.edu/help/Training/index.aspx)
If you have any questions regarding these email management best practices, please contact the ISU Service Desk, ISURquest@medsch.ucsf or visit our ISU Help and Support web site for additional How-To’s.

Thanks,

School of Medicine Information Services Unit