

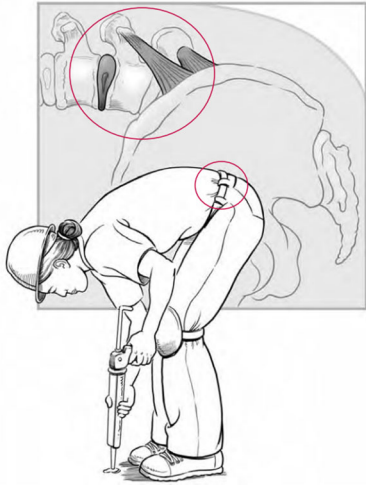
Safety TALK

Construction Ergonomics



Musculoskeletal injuries, or MSIs, occur in the soft tissues of your body, like the nerves, tendons, muscles, ligaments, and joints, and may develop slowly over time.

MSIs often start with minor discomfort, with some symptoms seemingly going away over a break, but over time, the symptoms increase in intensity, and eventually you may not be able to fully recover.



Risk Factors

Common risks for ergonomic hazards include:

Repetition – Completing the same task repeatedly, utilizing the same muscle group over and over.

Duration – How long are you completing the repetitive task or kept in an awkward posture.

High Force – Using extra muscle power during activities such as heavy lifting, pushing items, or gripping tools.

Awkward Postures – Working with your body bent, twisted, extended, crouched, or flexed rather than in a neutral position.

Contact Stress – When the pressure from an object is pressed into body tissues (i.e. tool handles).

Hand-Arm Vibration – Vibrations that enter the body from power tools or equipment.

Lighting – Too much or too little lighting can cause significant eye strain for workers in the workplace, leading workers to squint, and adopt poor postures to better see what they are working on.



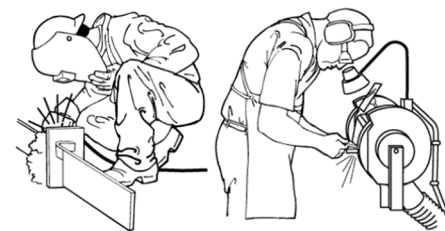
Dangers of MSIs

Recognizing the potential risk factors in work tasks that can lead to these symptoms is the first step to being able to eliminate them.

Work can be made more comfortable, and safer by using correct ergonomics. Ergonomics focuses on how people interact with their workspace, or conditions. It's a review of how to make those interactions as safe and efficient as possible for the worker.

Thinking about the tasks that are completed at your workplace that are uncomfortable or difficult to perform for long durations, think of the ergonomic solutions in small steps such as:

- Using equipment or dollies to move tools or materials.
- Use material lifts, work platforms, scaffolds or other equipment that will bring you to the work position.
- When using hand tools, one size does not fit all, tools need to properly fit the workers grip, and tools should be selected to keep workers wrists and posture in a neutral position as much as possible and should be maintained to help minimize vibration transfer.



Remember

In the workplace, when protecting yourself from MSIs, you must take the time to review the work that you are doing and reflect to ensure that you are not unnecessarily harming yourself, no one else will be able to tell you what hurts you.