



The earlier you identify a repetitive motion problem, the more likely you are to be able to do something about it. Workers need to pay attention to the warning signs such as numbness, tingling, and perceived loss of strength in muscles.

Cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs) are becoming more commonplace in the work world and are caused by repetitive movements over long periods of time.

Controls & Practices

Engineering controls are always the preferred method of control. This should be accomplished through the following procedures:

- **Workstations** – Should be made easily adjustable and either designed or selected to fit the task to the worker.
- **Work Methods** – Should be designed to reduce static, or extreme awkward postures, repetitive motions and excessive forces.
- **Tool Handles** – There are a variety of different tools available to fit the worker and reduce ergonomic risk.

Work Practices should include a program with key elements such as proper work techniques, worker conditioning, inspections and maintenance.

- **Proper Work Techniques** – Includes training on correct lifting procedures, workstations, fixtures and tools.
- **Worker Conditioning** – Includes workers gradually being worked into a full workload as appropriate for their specific job. Workers assigned to new tasks should also have a breaking in training period.
- **Inspections** – Need to be conducted regularly to ensure that safe operating procedures are being followed, and that tools being used are in good repair.

Repetitive Motion Injuries

Fatigue or tiredness in muscles and joints, that doesn't go away with rest, is your body's way of telling you to change your pattern of working.

Completing the same motion over and over or using the same body positions or grips may lead to pain and inflammation. Common types of inflammations are:

Tendinitis – inflammation of the tendons. May be caused by performing repeated motions incorrectly or in an awkward position.

Tenosynovitis – a condition where both the tendon and its covering become inflamed. Frequently caused by improper or repetitive bending of the wrist.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome – painful squeezing of the nerve in the wrist. Causes loss of grip, muscle pain, weakness and numbness in the thumb and first two fingers. Carpal tunnel testing can be completed to understand if this is what you're dealing with, and surgical options are available to repair the issue.



Remember

Repetitive movements are hazardous, and more so when they involve the same joints and muscle groups over and over.

Tasks requiring repetitive movements tend to involve other MSI risks such as static postures and force.