



Preventing Musculoskeletal Injuries

What Can Happen

Wrist, elbow and shoulder tendonitis; shoulder bursitis; carpal tunnel syndrome; back and neck pain; other muscle, tendon and joint injuries

What You Can Do?

Job Tasks

Vary your activities to change your posture and the muscles you are using if your work requires:

- ✓ repetitive movements, such as keyboard work, chopping food, assembly work or using hand tools with frequent twisting or turning
- ✓ awkward postures (e.g., long reaches, overhead work, bending forward) for a long time
- ✓ sustained postures such as standing or sitting for a long time
- ✓ forceful muscle movements, such as loosening a tire nut or heavy lifting
- ✓ pressing against a hard surface, such as resting your wrists against a keyboard tray while keying

Work Stations and Tools

- ✓ Adjust your workstation and seat to meet your needs
- ✓ Maintain a neutral, relaxed posture, and work in a comfortable position
- ✓ Use tools and equipment that reduce repetition, awkward or sustained postures, forceful muscle movements and pressing on hard surfaces
- ✓ Keep tools and equipment well maintained to reduce effort
- ✓ Keep frequently used tools, supplies and equipment within your natural arm's reach

Safe Lifting

- ✓ Take a balanced stance — put your feet shoulder-width apart
- ✓ Get close to the object and squat down to pick up the load

- ✓ Get a secure grip and carry the load close to your body
- ✓ Test the weight of the load before trying to lift it
- ✓ Lift the load gradually and smoothly, keeping your back and neck straight
- ✓ Turn your whole body when carrying a load, instead of twisting your back
- ✓ Follow these instructions in reverse when lowering a load

And Remember

- ✓ **Do not** work until you become sore or tired — report any discomfort to your supervisor
- ✓ **Do not** rely on personal protective equipment such as back belts to reduce musculoskeletal injuries

Did You Know?

- ✓ Your employer should ensure that you are trained to work in ways that reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injuries
- ✓ An ergonomist can help you set up your work area for maximum comfort and safety

