

MSD Prevention

supervisors

What are MSD?

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD) are injuries affecting muscles, tendons, ligaments and nerves. They are sometimes called Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSI), Cumulative Trauma Disorders (CTD) and Repetitive Motion Injuries (RMI).

MSD develop due to the effects of repetitive, forceful or awkward movements on joints, ligaments and other soft tissues. Some MSD injuries include Low Back Strain, Neck Strain, Tendonitis, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS), Rotator Cuff Syndrome, and Tennis Elbow (Epicondylitis).

What can you do?

Supervisors have legal responsibilities for health and safety, and must 'take every precaution reasonable' to protect workers. If you're a supervisor, there are some steps you can take to protect your workers from MSD hazards.

- Ensure everyone you supervise is aware of MSD hazards on the job and is trained to do their job safely.
- Look for MSD hazards during workplace inspections, job task analyses, discussions with workers and by reviewing injury reports.
- Supervise your workers to ensure
 - they work safely, and use equipment and protective devices properly,
 - they take breaks from repetitive, forceful tasks,
 - their workstations are adjusted to suit them and the work they do, and
 - they come to you with questions or concerns.
- Be aware of the MSD warning signs.
- Take action on reported hazards, follow-up with workers.

WHY PREVENT MSD?

Costs to the system:

MSD account for **40% of all work-related injuries.**

Costs to workers:

- pain and suffering
- disruption to home and work life
- impact on families, friends and the community

Costs to workplaces:

- lost productivity and revenue
- surcharges and lost rebates
- Ministry of Labour orders



ONLINE RESOURCES

PREVENTION DYNAMICS

To link to the health and safety association for your industry and to access their MSD resources, please visit www.preventiondynamics.com

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

www.labour.gov.on.ca

Check the Health and Safety Section for the Pains and Strains resources and information for preventing MSD.

PREVENTION PRACTICES DATABASE

www.preventionpractices.com

Find and share resources and practices for preventing MSD.

OSH FOR EVERYONE

www.oshforeveryone.org

Information to help you recognize, assess and control MSD hazards.

ONTARIO WORKPLACE GATEWAY

www.serviceontario.ca/workplacegateway

Check the Repetitive Strain section for information and links to help workplaces prevent MSD.

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers

OSH Answers service provides health and safety information on a variety of topics including MSD hazards and how to control them.

HEALTH CANADA

www.hc-sc.gc.ca

Look in the Environmental and Workplace Health section under Occupational Health and Safety.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE BOARD

www.wsib.on.ca

Find information about the WSIB services, programs and initiatives. Contact the WSIB for a copy of the Prevent MSD in Your Workplace CD-ROM.

WSIB Prevention Hotline:

416 344-1016 or 1-800-663-6639

For service in languages other than English call:

416-344-4999 or 1-800-465-5606

For Telephone Service for the Deaf (TTY): 1-800-387-0050

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Use the following checklist to help you identify task and equipment factors that can increase your workers' risk of developing a musculoskeletal disorder (MSD).

Preventing MSD – A Supervisors Checklist			
JOB NAME:	Date:		
Do workers on this job:	N/A	Yes	No
lift, lower or carry objects that are, in their opinion, heavy.			
have difficulties pushing or pulling items / objects.			
do tasks that require difficult and forceful gripping with the hands.			
use tools that require a great deal of effort to hold, control or use.			
use their hands to pound or hammer things when doing my job.			
do other high force tasks not covered above.			
work with their hands above their shoulders or held far away from the body.			
do tasks with one or both arms behind the body.			
bend or twist the back/ trunk.			
twist or bend (forward/back/to the side) the neck.			
hold their neck to one side (e.g. holding phone between ear and shoulder).			
need to bend or twist the wrist.			
pick up or hold things using difficult grips (pinch grips, wide finger grips).			
need to use other awkward postures that are not covered above.			
have to lift, lower or carry objects repeatedly when doing their job.			
repeatedly push or pull things when doing their job.			
repeatedly grip or manipulate things with their hands/fingers.			
repeatedly use awkward arm, hand or wrist postures.			
repeatedly use awkward back or neck postures.			
repeatedly use poorly designed hand tools when doing their job.			
repeatedly do tasks or use awkward postures that are not covered above.			
use hand tools that vibrate and/or are they exposed to whole body vibration.			
have too little space / clearance at their workstation / work area.			
have to stay in awkward postures for a long time without a change.			
sit or stand for long periods of time without a change in posture.			
feel like they don't have enough variety in their job.			
find the job to be very demanding.			

MSD WARNING SIGNS:

- Workers making changes to tools or workstations.
- Workers wearing splints or supports.
- Workers massaging muscles or shaking their arms/legs.
- Workers reporting pain, discomfort, or fatigue.
- Workers avoiding a certain task because it hurts them.

If you answered 'Yes' to any of these questions, your workers may be exposed to MSD hazards. Speak to your workers and work together to find ways to reduce their exposure to MSD hazards by changing the way the job is done or the design of the task/work area.