

## **PREVENTING REPETITIVE MOTION INJURIES**

Almost any kind of awkward or repetitive motion you make could lead to an injury over time. Actions like bending the wrists, twisting at the waist, reaching for materials, working with your hands above the shoulder level, or grasping objects can increase wear and tear on the body. This can result in musculoskeletal disorders that affect muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints or spinal disks.

There are protective measures you can take to reduce the chances of these kinds of injuries. Identify potential problems and adjust your work habits so you are using your body in the safest and most efficient way. Use these tips for working the smart way:

- ❖ Arrange your workstation, supplies and tools as much as possible to avoid reaching, leaning, bending and twisting your waist or wrists.
- ❖ Adjust your posture or supplies and tools to minimize constant contact with furniture or machinery. Try to avoid leaning into edges of furniture and machines, or resting your hands, elbows or knees on surfaces.
- ❖ Vary tasks if you can so that you are not making the same movement repeatedly over for a long period.
- ❖ During rest breaks, use stretches to loosen up your body.
- ❖ If you suspect an injury, report it immediately to your supervisor so that proper action can be taken.

## **CONDITIONING EXERCISES TO PREVENT RMIs**

### **NECK FLEX**

Sit or stand with your shoulders relaxed and your head erect. Turn your head slowly to the right and then to the left as far as you can without discomfort. Next tilt your head slowly to the right and then to the left, bringing your ear close to your shoulder. Do not raise your shoulder! Repeat five times.

## **SHOULDER ROLLS**

With your head erect, relax your arms at your sides. With your elbows close to your sides, raise your shoulders up and rotate them back, down, forward, and up. Repeat five times. Change direction and rotate your shoulders forward, down, back, and up. Repeat five times.

## **WRIST FLEX**

Start with your wrist straight and fingers extended. Slowly bend the wrist downward until your hand forms a right angle with your forearm. Return to starting position. Then bend your wrist as far back as you can. Repeat five times with each hand.

## **CLENCH AND FAN**

With your wrist held straight, make a fist and hold it for five seconds. Release and spread your fingers, and hold for five seconds. Repeat five times with each hand.

## **PALM UP / PALM DOWN**

With your elbow at your side, hold your forearm out with the palm facing downward. Rotate your palm upward. Alternate between these positions five times. Repeat with the other arm.

Content Source: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) (Users of Safety Talk are advised to determine the suitability of the information as it applies to local situations and work practices and its conformance with applicable laws and regulations).

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