

TOOLBOX SAFETY TALK

WHAT TASKS AT YOUR WORKSITE COULD EXPOSE YOU TO ERGONOMIC HAZARDS?

EXPLAIN THE DANGER: ERGONOMIC INJURY FACTS

The following can increase your risk of having an injury related to ergonomic hazards:

- **Repetitive tasks:** using the same muscles repeatedly.
- **Awkward postures or stationary positions:** Working in a bent, twisted, extended, or flexed position.
- **High force tasks:** Using extra muscle power during activities such as heavy lifting or pushing heavy objects.
- **Direct pressure tasks:** Prolonged contact with a hard surface or edge.
- **Hand–arm vibration:** Vibrations entering the body from power tools or equipment.
- **Poor workflow:** A job setup that requires constant lifting, carrying, twisting, and/or monotonous tasks to complete tasks.

Top 3 types of ergonomic injuries:

- Sprains, strains, and tears
- Traumatic injuries to muscles and joints, etc.
- Other unspecified injuries and disorders

PREVENTING ERGONOMIC INJURIES

Assess and Discuss:

- Have conditions at your worksite recently changed (for example, lighting, new job tasks, new equipment) that could increase workers’ exposure to an ergonomic hazard?
- Is anything unusual happening (for example, unusual equipment operations, maintenance, temporary thermal variations) that could affect the ergonomic practices at the worksite?

IDENTIFY CONTROLS

- Can you eliminate or defer a task based on **worksite demands** and conditions?
- Can you **substitute** a different tool or task to reduce ergonomic risks?
- Can you use **engineering controls** such as:
 - Redesign workstations/work areas to eliminate reaching, bending?
 - Use adjustable tables and chairs that allow neutral postures?
 - Eliminate lifting by using carts or mechanical hoists?
- Can you implement **administrative controls**? This includes creating or reviewing safe job procedures, adjusting schedules, training, establishing maintenance schedules for equipment, etc.
- Do you need **personal protective equipment** such as knee pads, lifting belts, shoulder pads, or gloves?

See: OHS Regulations – Sections 12, 21, 24, 27, 85, and 135, Mine Health and Safety Regulations – Sections 1.159, 3.19, 9.04, 9.57, 9.70 – 9.74, 10.13, 10.18