

MODULE 2 – MSI Hazard Identification – MSI Risk Factors in Work

MSI are soft tissue injuries caused or made worse by work.

What are the main risk factors (hazards) for MSI at work?

- Forceful exertion
 - Lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying, gripping
- Awkward postures
 - Reaching, bending, twisting
- Repetitive movements or repetitive forceful exertions
 - Using the same body part over and over, even for different activities
- Sustained awkward postures or sustained forceful exertion
 - Holding an awkward posture or forceful exertion without rest
- Contact pressure
 - Leaning on edges or hard surfaces
 - Heavy things with small handles, or
 - Using your hand (or other body parts) as a hammer

When is MSI Risk high?

- When any single hazard is severe or large – very high force or very awkward posture
- The duration of exposure is long – longer exposure means higher risk of MSI
- More than one hazard exists at the same time – forceful exertion while in awkward posture

What other contributing factors increase MSI Risk?

- Cold (e.g., refrigerated zones) or Hot work (e.g., bakery, summer) – reduce physical ability
- Uneven or slippery flooring – risk of slip, trip, fall particularly if carrying things
- Poor lighting – darkness, shadow or glare make it hard to see and change postures
- Unaccustomed or new work – it takes time to learn technique and to get used to the work
- Extended shifts or overtime – longer duration of exposure to risk factors

How can you reduce MSI risk?

- Take the time to set up your work to minimize MSI risk
- Understand and use the equipment provided
- Follow directions for preferred technique and use of MSI risk controls
- Ask for assistance if unsure or if you have concerns
- Aim to:
 - Minimize forceful exertion – lower forces are lower risk
 - Work in neutral postures – target upright positions, with no reaching or twisting
 - Take scheduled breaks and build rest into repetitive tasks
 - Be aware of your body and respond to early MSI signs or symptoms

Discussion or Follow-up

1. What are the MSI risk factors in the work that you will be doing today?
2. What is your plan to reduce your risk of MSI today?
3. Who do you talk to if you have concerns about MSI or MSI risk?