

Ergonomics!

Many injuries in the construction industry are musculoskeletal disorders caused by cumulative trauma. These injuries result from cumulative wear and tear and are called cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs). Tendinitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, and some types of back injuries are common examples of CTDs. Construction workplace risk factors for CTDs include repetitive motions, high forces, awkward postures, and vibration exposure. Do these sound like dangers that you are exposed to in your work? CTDs in the construction industry can be associated with such activities as manual material handling, hand tool usage, and prolonged equipment operation. CTDs most commonly occur in the wrists, arms, shoulders, and back. As a component of a CTDs prevention plan, task-specific pre-shift stretching and warm-up exercises can help acclimate the body for the demands of the active workday ahead.

Strategies you can use to reduce your exposure to CTDs:

- Do a few warm-up exercises before you take on any physically demanding tasks.
- Plan ahead. Look at the job you are about to do and think of ways to make it easier on your body.
- Eliminate unnecessary carrying. Reduce manual material handling tasks by using forklifts, hand trucks, or dollies.
- Remember to use proper lifting techniques.
- When using hand tools, avoid awkward and repetitive movements by using the right tool for the job.
- Use vibrating tools with vibration-dampening handles or wear vibration-dampening gloves.
- Avoid repetitive trigger-finger action. Select tools with large switches.
- Change positions, stretch often, and take short breaks from repetitive motion tasks.
- Use assistive equipment such as back and wrist supports.

Do This!

- Utilize mechanical advantage when available I.E. forklifts, hand trucks, or dollies.
- Use proper lifting techniques.
- Get help lifting items that weigh more than 50lbs.
- Insure there is a clear path of travel while carrying materials.
- Do a few warm-up exercises before you take on any physically demanding tasks.
- Change positions, stretch often, and take short breaks from repetitive motion tasks.
- Avoid repetitive trigger-finger action. Select tools with large switches
- Use vibration-dampening handles or wear vibration-dampening gloves when working with tools that cause vibration.
- Know your limitations when it comes to lifting.

Don't do this!

- Attempt to lift items that are awkward and or exceed 50lbs.
- Attempt lifts using jerking motions.
- Lift materials before warming up via stretching or warm up excersises.
- Twist your body while carrying materials.
- Lift material using your back only.
- Carry materials through clutterd work areas.
- Ignore muscle soreness and continue lifting materials anyways.
- Never ask for help from co-workers.



