



HOW TO AVOID REPETITIVE INJURIES

Safety Suggestions For Those Whose Jobs Require Repetitive Motion of Their Upper Body--Fingers, Wrists, Elbows and Shoulders

There are many functions in the workplace which require repetitive motion. In these repetitive motions, workers challenge their upper body muscles and joints (fingers, wrists, elbows, and shoulders) to keep up with the desire to do a good job.

As an organization, our goal is to help you become aware of the simple ways to avoid the uncomfortable symptoms of what has been referred to as repetitive trauma or repetitive stress injuries.

EXERCISES TO HELP PREVENT INJURY FROM JOBS REQUIRING REPETITIVE MOTION

Regular exercise is a key ingredient to preventing injury caused from repetitive hand and finger motions. There are two kinds of exercise that are helpful.

Flexibility Exercises

One type involves flexibility. The other is aimed at developing strength. Although most people don't think in terms of specific exercises for their hands and wrists, such Exercises exist and can be accomplished easily, any time, any place.

The following flexibility exercises may be helpful:

1. **Finger stretch:** Spread the fingers of both hands as far apart as possible and hold the position for five seconds. Repeat at least three times.
2. **Thumb stretch:** Extend one hand in front of you and with the other hand gently pull the thumb down and back until you feel the stretch. Hold for five seconds and repeat three times. Then do the same with the other hand.
3. **Wrist circle:** With both arms outstretched, draw a circle with your fingertips. Do five movements to the left and then five to the right.
4. **Wrist curl:** Drop one hand downward from the wrist. Using the palm of the other hand, push gently against the dropped hand until you feel the pressure. Hold for five seconds and repeat up to three times. Then change hands and repeat the exercise, which stretches the muscles in the back of the forearm.

5. **Wrist extension:** Hold one hand in front of you with the fingers pointing up. Press the palm against the other hand, holding the position for about five seconds. Relax and repeat twice more. This will stretch the muscles in the front of the forearm.

Strength Exercises:

For strength, these exercises are recommended:

1. **Handgrip:** Squeeze something such as a dry sponge as many times as possible. This will develop hand and finger muscles. Try to do 20 to 30 continuous repetitions with each hand.
2. **Thumb squeeze:** With a ball in the palm of your hand, press the ball toward the fingers with your thumb. Don't press the ball with your fingers. Just hold it in place with the fingers and do the entire pressing with the thumb. The purpose is to develop thumb muscles.
3. **Wrist curl:** Place your right arm on the right thigh with the hand hanging in front of the kneecap, palm up. Grasp the palm with your left hand. Then, while applying pressure with the left hand, attempt to curl the right hand upward without raising your forearm off your thigh. Do the same thing on the left side. This exercise will develop the wrist flexor muscles.
4. **Wrist extension:** Place your right arm on your right thigh with the palm of the hand facing down. Place your left hand over the back of your right hand. Again, while applying pressure with the left hand, raise the right hand upward. Repeat for the left side. This exercise develops The wrist extensor muscle.

QUESTIONS?

Call your supervisor or Tom Vogel in the Sacramento office

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Even though you may be an "expert " on your job, thadoesn't mean you can relax and not be vigilant when it comes to safety. As the picture illustrates, unless you pay attention, your job can kill you. Sue Owen submitted this picture to me in our Yuba City Offices. Because of that we sent her two movie tickets. Also, if you read the last issue of "The Wrinkle' you will see that I gave away movies tickets if you called in and told me that you read The Wrinkle. Congratulations to Marlene Powell, Yuba City and Ruth Davis, Fresno for reading the safety newsletter. Keep you eyes open. In future issues, we will be doing the same thing in future issues of The Wrinkle. Keep up the good

work!



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