

# Ergonomics Training Outline - for employees

## I. Preparation

- Observe each job type in your department:
- Take notes on improper ergonomic movements
- Correct those you see and discuss during safety meeting

## II. Training Materials

- A. Lesson Plan
- B. Video: Ergonomics: (Title)

## III. Introduce Topic and Objective

- A. The OSHA Standard
- B. General ergonomics
- C. Company Ergonomics Program
- D. Employee's role
- E. MSD signs & symptoms
- F. Reporting procedures
- G. Risk Factors
- H. Control methods
- I. Employee's role in evaluating effectiveness of controls
- J. Company plan and timetable for MSDs
- K. Medical management

## IV. The OSHA Standard

OSHA has issued an ergonomics standard to reduce musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) developed by workers whose jobs involve repetitive motions, force, awkward postures, contact stress and vibration.

The OSHA rule requires the company to inform workers about common MSDs, MSD signs and symptoms and the importance of early reporting. When a worker reports signs or symptoms of an MSD, the employer must determine whether the injury meets the definition of an **MSD incident** -- a work-related MSD that requires medical treatment beyond first aid, assignment to a light duty job or temporary removal from work to recover, or work-related MSD signs or MSD symptoms that last for seven or more consecutive days.

OSHA has provided a **Basic Screening Tool** that identifies risk factors that could lead to MSD hazards. If the risk factors on the job meet the

levels of exposure in the Basic Screening Tool, then the job meets what OSHA calls an "Action Trigger."

If a job meets the Action Trigger, the company will implement an Ergonomic program, including all the required elements, to eliminate or control the MSD hazards

What are MSD? - **see discussion material below**

## **V. General Ergonomics**

- A. ERGONOMICS is the process of fitting a job environment to a worker. To achieve this we use the following:
  1. Engineering and Administrative Controls
  2. Work site analysis
  3. Training and education
  4. Employee involvement

## **VI. Ergonomic Program Elements**

### A. Management Leadership includes

1. Assignment of responsibilities for setting up and managing the ergonomics program so managers, supervisors and employees know what is expected
2. Providing authority, resources, information and training necessary to meet program goals
- 3 Examining existing policies and practices to ensure they meet the Ergonomic Program requirements

### B. Employee Involvement includes

1. A way for you to promptly report signs and symptoms of WMSDs and WMSD hazards, and to make recommendations about appropriate ways to control them
2. Prompt responses to your reports and recommendations.

3. Means for your involvement which includes:

- Participation on safety & health committees
- Suggestions for supervisors & management
- Review and comment on existing job hazard analysis

#### C. Hazard Information & Reporting

1. Hazard information is provided in two forms

General hazard information  
such as risk factors

Hazard information on  
specific jobs or tasks in the  
form of Job Hazard Analysis

2. Reporting - an important part of the program is you reporting of any MSD hazards, signs or symptoms so management can investigate and correct any problems as quickly as possible

#### D. Job Hazard Analysis & Control

1. Job hazard analysis is the process of looking at each step of a job to identify any possible MSD hazards

2. Control methods are the changes made to either eliminate or limit your exposure to MSD hazards

E. Employee Training - an important part of our program - the more you know, the better our program

F. MSD Medical Management - If you ever have an MSD sign or symptom, the company has a procedure that ensures quick evaluation and help.

G. Program Evaluation - we will periodically look at our program to ensure it remains effective in identifying, correcting and controlling MSD hazards

H. Records - the company maintains program records so we can make sure that past actions have been continued

## **VII. Employee's Role**

A. Early Reporting of Signs & Symptoms

B. Feedback on Control Effectiveness

C. Recommendations for Controls

## **VIII. MSD signs & symptoms**

A. Importance of early reporting

B. How to report signs & symptoms

C. MSD Signs & Symptoms - see discussion material below

## **IX. Control Methods - see discussion material below**

A. Engineering Controls

B. Administrative Controls

C. Work Practice Controls

## **X. MSD Risk Factors include**

**A. Posture** - Hips and head in straight line, alternate elevating one foot at a time for comfort

**B. Reach** - Avoid extending or holding elbow away from body

**C. Gripping Techniques** - Use only the minimum force necessary - straight wrist - power grip

**D. Use of Tools** - Hand tools, knives, scissors, etc - Proper design, support, grip and motion

**E. Hand Motions** - Use both hands if possible, hands should be palm down to perform tasks

**F. Arm and Wrist Positions** - Avoid rotating wrists, avoid reaching over shoulder height, elbows in to sides

**G. Lifting & Moving Material** - proper lifting techniques - no twisting - use lifting assist equipment, carts and other material moving equipment

## **XI. Ergonomic Concerns In Your Areas**

- A. Discuss ergonomic concerns in your department
- B. *Discuss the Proper Ergonomic Practices* needed at the various workstations in your department.

## **XII. Medical Management**

- A. If you have signs & symptoms - tell your supervisor immediately
- B. Early reporting MSDs signs & symptoms is essential
- C. Prompt access to health care professionals will be provided at no expense to you
- D. Information to be provided to the health care professional includes:
  - 1. A description of the employee's job and information about the physical work activities, risk factors and MSD hazards in the job.
  - 2. A copy of this standard
  - 3. A list of information that the HCP's opinion must contain.
- E. Health care professional written opinion is required and will be provided to you
- F. Employee privacy and confidentiality is maintained
- G. Company Work Restriction Policy

H. Company Compensation Policy

**XIII. Review Pre-Work Warm-up & Stretching Exercises.**

- A. Gets your body ready to perform work
- B. PARTICIPATION in this activity is PART OF THEIR JOB.

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**Discussion Material**

A. Supervisors and our Ergonomic Program Coordinator have received Ergonomic Training which they use to conduct work site analysis used to develop and implement ergonomic changes.

B. (Company) has a very strong Ergonomics Program designed to identify and correct MSD hazards

C. An ergonomic committee made up of Management and Employees has also been trained in the Ergonomic program. This Team works on ergonomic suggestions and improvement development.

D. We have an Ergonomic Suggestion Program to allow all Employees the opportunity to make recommendations for ergonomic improvements.

**Muscular-Skeletal Disorders (MSD)**

**A. Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)** are an injury or illness of soft tissues of the upper extremity (fingers through upper arm), shoulders and neck, low back, and lower extremity (hips through toes) that is primarily caused or exacerbated by workplace risk factors, such as sustained and repeated exertions or awkward postures and manipulations. Included are disorders of the muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, cartilage and spinal disks. Medical conditions that generally develop gradually over a period of time, and do not typically result from a single instantaneous event. MSDs do not include injuries caused by slip, trips, falls, or other similar accidents. They can differ in severity from mild periodic symptoms to severe chronic and debilitating conditions. Examples of MSDs include:

- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Epicondylitis
- Synovitis
- Muscle strains
- Raynaud's phenomenon
- Sciatica
- Tendonitis
- Rotator cuff tendonitis
- De Quervains' disease
- Carpet layers knee
- Trigger finger
- Low back pain

**B. Signs of Muscular-Skeletal Disorders** are objective physical findings. Examples of signs of MSDs include:

- Decreased range of motion
- Decreased grip strength
- Loss of function
- Deformity
- Swelling
- Cramping
- Redness/loss of color

**C. Symptoms** of MSDs are physical indications that your employee may be developing an MSD. Symptoms can vary in their severity depending on the amount of exposure the employee has had. Often symptoms appear gradually as muscle fatigue or pain at work that disappears during rest. Usually symptoms become more severe as exposure continues (e.g., tingling continues when your employee is at rest, numbness or pain makes it difficult to perform the job, and finally pain is so severe that the employee is unable to perform physical work activities). Examples of symptoms MSDS include:

- Numbness
- Burning
- Pain
- Tingling
- Aching
- Stiffness

## Control Methods

**A. Engineering Controls**, where feasible, are the preferred method for controlling MSD hazards. Engineering controls are the physical changes to jobs that control exposure to MSD hazards. Engineering controls act on the source of the hazard and control employee exposure to the hazard without relying on the employee to take self-protective action or intervention. Examples of engineering

controls for MSD hazards include changing, modifying or redesigning the following:

- Workstations
- Tools
- Facilities
- Equipment
- Materials
- Processes

**B. Work Practice Controls** are controls that reduce the likelihood of exposure to MSD hazards through alteration of the manner in which a job or physical work activities are performed. Work practice controls also act on the source of the hazard. However, instead of physical changes to the workstation or equipment, the protection work practice controls provide is based upon the behavior of managers, supervisors and employees to follow proper work methods. Work practice controls include procedures for safe and proper work that are understood and followed by managers, supervisors and employees. Examples of work practice controls for MSD hazards include:

- Safe and proper work techniques and procedures that are understood and followed by managers, supervisors and employees.

- Conditioning period for new or reassigned employees.

- Training in the recognition of MSS hazards and work techniques that can reduce exposure or ease task demands and burdens.

**C. Administrative Controls** are procedures and methods, typically instituted by the employer, that significantly reduce daily exposure to MSD hazards by altering the way in which work is performed. Examples of administrative controls for MSD hazards include:

- Employee rotation
- Job task enlargement
- Adjustment of work pace (e.g., slower pace)
- Redesign of work methods
- Alternative tasks
- Rest breaks