

# Musculoskeletal Injuries (MSIs)

A musculoskeletal injury (MSI) is an injury to muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves, blood vessels, or related soft tissue. Examples of MSIs include sprains, strains, and inflammation that may be caused or aggravated by work. These injuries account for more than one-third of claims accepted by WorkSafeBC.

Many tasks in a school setting can put staff at risk for a musculoskeletal injury, including

- Clerical tasks such as keying
- Moving heavy objects such as athletic equipment, classroom furniture, or boxes of office supplies
- Sitting in chairs meant for children
- Lifting and handling students with special needs

Effective prevention involves the following measures:

- Perform a risk assessment to identify tasks and situations that can put staff at risk. (See the Risk Assessment poster for more information.)
- Make changes to the work environment that eliminate risks, where possible.
- Provide information and training to staff, wherever tasks that involve risk cannot be completely eliminated.

Check out the resources listed here to learn more about MSIs and how to prevent them. Several of these resources include checklists that can be used to analyze risks and record findings.

## In the OHS Regulation

- Section 4.46–4.53, Ergonomics (MSI) Requirements

## Resources

Available from  
WorkSafeBC.com/Publications  
Booklets & pamphlets

- *Preventing Musculoskeletal Injury* (BK77; for employers and joint committees)
- *Understanding the Risks of Musculoskeletal Injury* (BK78; for workers)
- *Back Talk: An Owner's Manual for Backs* (BK4)
- *Making it Right: A Guide to Reducing Sprains and Strains in Manufacturing* (BK110)
- *Watch Your Back: Back Health in the Workplace*
- *A Clean Sweep: Safe Work Practices for Custodians* (BK102)

## Bulletins

- Constructive Ideas: Reducing Soft Tissue Injuries (series)
    - What Are MSIs?
    - Assessing the Risks of Sprains and Strains
    - MSI Risk Factors
  - Safety in Manufacturing—Ergonomics: Forceful Exertion
  - Does Your Back Hurt?
- Worksheets for handling objects
- MSI Risk Factor Identification Worksheet
  - MSI Risk Factor Assessment Worksheet

# Safety is everyone's responsibility!

WorkSafeBC Prevention Information Line: 604 276-3100 • Toll-free: 1 888 621-SAFE (7233)

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