SIX WORKPLACE FIXES TO KEEP WORKERS’ BACKS, SHOULDERS, NECKS AND HANDS HAPPY & HEALTHY

POSTERS

1 STORE IT OFF THE FLOOR: Store – and work on – objects between hip and chest height.
2 KEEP IT CLOSE: Store objects or work close to the belly button.
3 HANDS BELOW HEAD: Work with hands below the head.
4 LOOK STRAIGHT AHEAD: Work with the head straight and level.
5 GET A (GOOD) GRIP: Objects, tools and gloves should fit hands, keep hands and wrists strong, and not vibrate.
6 CHANGE IT UP: A well-organized job has variety and pauses that give the body time to recover.
7 WORK SHOULDN’T HURT: Find jobs that may have MSD hazards.

HOW TO USE THE POSTERS

• Use the posters as guides during workplace walkthroughs and inspections. On the back of the poster, write observations and ideas about possible fixes for hazards.
• Use the posters as a script to aid workers, supervisors and others during safety or toolbox talks. Use the discussion to brainstorm possible fixes.
• Use the posters in the lunchroom or on the Health & Safety board to alert workers to potential MSD hazards in their work and their relationship to pain and discomfort.
• Keep looking for improvements!

WHAT DO THE COLOURS MEAN ON THE POSTERS?

GREEN – No action required if tasks are not held or repeated for long periods and no MSD symptoms are reported. Continue to monitor for MSD symptoms and check after workplace or process changes.

YELLOW – Investigations and improvement needed in the longer term. Investigation and improvement needed immediately if MSD symptoms are present.

ORANGE – Further assessment or improvement needed immediately.

Each poster describes a common workplace hazard that can lead to MSD. It also gives ideas on how to fix it. MSD hazards can be found in all sizes of workplaces and in all sectors.

You may recognise some or all six hazards in your workplace. This tells you that your workplace would benefit from MSD prevention actions.

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For more info visit: msdprevention.com
MAKING A START

Starting is the most important part of reducing back pain, shoulder tendinitis, tennis elbow and other Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD). This package will give you a good start.

Some of the ideas may seem very simple, but you can substantially reduce MSD hazards by applying these ideas throughout your workplace (and home).

The mini-posters give you the general idea behind the fix. For example, STORE IT OFF THE FLOOR shows how to store objects. It’s the same rule for storing boxes in an office, moving parts in manufacturing, or setting up stands and work surfaces for heavy tasks in construction.

ACTIONS

• Jump straight in. Start using these posters in your workplace inspections and toolbox talks and make changes to remove or reduce any hazards.
• Follow the steps on the facing page for a more systematic approach.

WANT HELP?

There are many websites with straightforward fixes for MSD hazards and many groups and organizations that you can turn to for information and help.

The Ontario Ministry of Labour has partners in many sectors that can provide resources and answer your questions: www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/websites.php

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety has pages dedicated to the prevention of MSD: www.ccohs.ca/topics/hazards/ergonomic

The Washington State Department of Labour in the US has collected a wide range of fixes for MSD hazards: www.ini.wa.gov/safety/sprainsstrains/ideasbank/default.asp

This guide was written to help very small businesses make sure that workers can go home without pain. It is part of a larger resource: the MSD Prevention Guideline (www.msdprevention.com). The website includes the information in this Quick Start Guide as well as resources to help prevent MSD and materials for larger organizations.

Authorship: This document has been written by the Centre of Research Expertise for the Prevention of Musculoskeletal Disorders (CRE-MSD) in collaboration with multiple workplace stakeholders. (www.CRE-MSD.uwaterloo.ca)

Disclaimers: The information provided in this folder and mini-posters is based upon best current knowledge and is intended to help workplaces reduce MSD. The information and opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of CRE-MSD, the Ministry of Labour or the Province of Ontario.

For questions, comments and suggestions please contact: info@msdprevention.com