

TIPS to Prevent High Muscle Forces

Muscles produce force to move or hold a posture. High forces can result in injury.

High forces are required to lift, lower, carry, push, or pull heavy objects, especially in awkward postures. High forces are also required to hold a posture, especially for long periods.

To reduce your risk of injury, PRACTICE THESE TIPS . . .

- Push rather than pull carts.
- When pushing a cart, place your hands just below shoulder level on the cart handle.
- Ensure carts are maintained properly.
Tires should be fully inflated and the wheels should not be bent or misaligned. This will decrease the amount of force required to push the cart.
Report faulty carts to your supervisor.
- Vary your technique to use different muscles (e.g., alternate arms when scrubbing, vacuuming, and tucking sheets).
- Pad your knees (e.g., wear knee pads or use a mat or towel) and change your position often when kneeling.
- Wear shoes with enough cushioning to relieve the stress on your knees and back when you are on your feet for long periods.

TIPS to Prevent Repetitive Work

The same muscles are used over and over again in repetitive work.

Repeated forceful movements – especially in awkward postures – increase the risk of injury.

To reduce your risk of injury, PRACTICE THESE TIPS . . .

- Vary your technique to use different muscles, such as alternating between left and right hands.
- Take “micro pauses”.

Micro Pause

- Let muscles rest by pausing for 5 to 10 seconds.
- Return to an upright posture and let your arms hang loosely by your sides.

This pamphlet contains general information about tasks that contribute to musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) such as sprains and strains. A musculoskeletal injury (MSI) prevention program is the responsibility of the employer. For further information, see sections 4.47 – 4.58 of the Occupational Health & Safety Regulation and the WCB publications “Understanding the Risks of Musculoskeletal Injury (MSI): An educational guide for workers on sprains, strains, and other MSIs” and “Preventing Musculoskeletal Injury (MSI): A guide for employers and joint committees”.

Based on work by BC Research Inc. under the Workers’ Compensation Board of British Columbia, Grants and Awards WorkSafe Solutions Grant #97FS-24H

Additional copies may be obtained through:

Workers’ Compensation Board of B.C.
Publications and Videos Section
6711 Elmbridge Way
Richmond BC V7C 4N1

Phone (604) 276-3068
Fax (604) 279-7406

WCB Prevention Information Line

The WCB Prevention Information Line can answer your questions about workplace health and safety, worker and employer responsibilities, and reporting a workplace incident. The Prevention Information Line accepts anonymous calls.

Phone 604 276-3100 in the Lower Mainland, or call 1 888 621-SAFE (7233) toll-free in B.C.

To report after-hours and weekend incidents and emergencies, call 604 273-7711 or toll-free 1 866 922-4357.

ERGONOMIC TIPS

for the Hospitality Industry



Preventing Injuries to
Room Attendants



WorkSafe

What is Ergonomics?

Many of the ways we work – such as lifting, reaching, or repeating the same movements – may strain our bodies and lead to injuries.

Ergonomics prevents these types of injuries by fitting the job to the person using proper equipment and work practices. This results in the safest way to work and prevents workplace injuries.

The high number of sprains and strains (musculoskeletal injuries – MSIs) in the hospitality industry concerns employers, workers, and the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB).

Employers must provide equipment and establish safe work practices to reduce the risks of sprains and strains (MSI). Employers must also instruct workers in these safe work practices. Workers must follow employers' instructions to protect themselves.

Working together, employers and workers can prevent many sprain and strain type injuries (MSIs).

Risk Factors

Many jobs have risks that can lead to sprain and strain injuries (MSIs). If we are aware of the risk factors, we may be able to change how we do our jobs and prevent injuries.

This pamphlet explains some of the risks of attending rooms, and provides tips on work practices to prevent injuries.

Prevention is the best policy.

TIPS to Prevent Awkward Postures

Our bodies function best in comfortable (neutral) postures. Awkward body postures increase the stress on ligaments and joints. This can lead to fatigue and discomfort, and increase the risk of injury.

Making beds and cleaning bathrooms is hard on your shoulders, back, and knees.

Example of an awkward back posture



Example of improved back posture



Example of improved back posture



You may not feel pain or discomfort when in risky postures, but the potential for injury is still present.

Be aware of your posture when you work.

Example of awkward shoulder and wrist posture



To reduce your risk of injury, PRACTICE THESE TIPS . . .

Making beds

- Bend your knees, not your back.
- Kneel or squat and do one side of the bed at a time.
- Reduce awkward shoulder postures when replacing duvet covers.

For example, use the “inside-out” method to slide the cover around the duvet, instead of stuffing the duvet into the cover.

This method can also be used for changing pillow cases.

Cleaning bathrooms

- Use tools with long handles for hard-to-reach areas.
- Use a step stool to reduce the distance you reach when changing shower curtains.
- Stand in the tub to scrub the walls and back of the tub.

DO NOT BALANCE ON THE EDGE OF THE TUB.