



Talking Points:

Ergonomics and Body Posture...Why Does it Matter?

- The #1 cause of injury in the United States workplace is strains and sprains. Strains and sprains are caused by ergonomic issues such as:
 - **Repetition** – doing the same task repeatedly which leads to using the same muscles over and over.
 - **Excessive force** – using extra muscle power during activities such as heavy lifting, pushing items, or gripping tools.
 - **Awkward postures** – working with your body bent, twisted, extended, or flexed rather than in a neutral comfortable position.
- Putting your body in an awkward position can almost **triple** the chance of injury if you also do repetitive movements or use excess force while completing tasks.
- Think about all of the work you do throughout the workday – how many times are you bending over, squatting, twisting, or extending? Now ask yourself – when doing these actions, how many times were you using tools, pushing, pulling, or forcing a part or item at the same time? If you answered multiple times to any of the above, you have an increased risk of a strain or sprain injury.
- So, what can you do? Stop before doing a task – can you sit or stand to get higher or lower to complete the task without putting your body in an awkward posture? Do you have to use manual force, or is there a tool that can mechanically can apply force? If you need anything to help improve your body posture and decrease your risk of a strain or sprain, speak up and ask for it. Help to create a safer workplace.

Questions to review knowledge:

1. What is the #1 cause of injury in the United States?

2. True or False – Awkward posture, excessive force, and repetition decrease strain or sprain injuries?

3. What can you do to lower your risk of a strain or sprain injury? _____

4. True or False – Putting your body in an awkward position can almost triple the chance of injury if you also do repetitive movements?

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