



Tip Sheet

“Clean Safe, Work Comfortable” – Ergonomics of Cleaning

How we move, sit, twist, lift, stand and perform other everyday motions and tasks affects how we all feel on a day-to-day basis. Sometimes performing routine tasks and movements in a way that puts strain on the body can lead to serious injury and time out of work.

Bending, Lifting, Stretching Do & Don'ts		
<i>Bending</i>		
Do		Don't
Bend at knees		Bend at hips
Use a split stance when possible		Keep legs straight and together
Keep back straight		Hunch back when reaching
When cleaning below knee level, kneel if possible		Twist body while reaching
<i>Lifting</i>		
Do		Don't
Take small steps & walk slowly		Walk quickly with load
Take steps & turn whole body		Twist torso only with object
Bend at knees when picking up & lowering objects		Bend at hips when lifting & lowering objects
<i>Stretching</i>		
Do		Don't
Reach within arm's natural reach		Reach beyond arm's natural reach
Stretch directly in front of body		Twist body when reaching
Move whole body to reposition		Distort or twist torso to reposition body

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports 650,000 work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WRMSDs), resulting in costs to employers of over 20 billion dollars. These costs include Worker's Compensation and medical expenses, the latter of which are increasing 2.5 times faster than benefit costs.

- **\$1 of every \$3** of Worker's Compensation costs are spent on occupational musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)
- Employers pay **\$15-20 billion** per year in Worker's Compensation costs for lost workdays.
- Worker's Compensation claims *per injury* equal **\$29,000 - \$32,000 per year.**
- Medical bills for the average shoulder injury (excluding surgery) are **\$20,000 per year.**

Indirect costs are 3 to 5 times higher, reaching approximately \$150 billion per year. These include absenteeism, staff replacement, retraining, productivity, and/or quality.

ERGONOMICS –

The word ergonomics comes from two Greek words. “Ergon” means work and “nomos” means natural law.

WHAT IS ERGONOMICS?

Ergonomics is the fit between people, the things they do, the objects they use and the environments they work, travel and play in.

ERGONOMIC HAZARDS & INJURIES

Ergonomic hazards refer to conditions that pose the risk of injury to the musculoskeletal system.

Examples of musculoskeletal injuries:

- Tennis Elbow
- Carpal Tunnel syndrome

Ergonomic hazards include:

- Excessive repetitive movements
- Vibration
- Temperature extremes
- Awkward postures that arise from improper movements & improperly designed environments, tools, & equipment

Examples of Cleaning – Dos & Don'ts

Dos ----- Kitchen Cleaning ----- Don'ts



Posture:

- Kneeling & cleaning within arm's natural reach.
- Using other hand for support.

Result:

- Torso is bent at an angle that will not put any strain on lower back.



Posture:

- Knees are not bent.
- Bending at the hips.

Result:

- Slouching over.
- Reaching out of natural reach.

Floor Cleaning



Posture:

- Weight is distributed between both legs and both arms.
- Back is straight and head is down.

Result:

- There is no strain washing the area right below her hand.



Posture:

- Out of natural reach.
- Twisting torso.

Result:

- Knees and arms support more weight on one side.
- Uncomfortable twist creates strain on back muscles.