Musculoskeletal Disorders

Painful disorders of muscles, tendons, and nerves that develop over time from tasks that repeatedly cause stress and injury to tissues.

Common causes
- Material handling: Injuries due to repeated lifting, pushing, and pulling
- Workstation: Furniture, layout, job design, and keyboarding
- Repetitive motion injuries: Risk factors due to job design, awkward body motions, and tools
- Inadequate job design: Pace of work, production pressure, lack of sufficient time to recover from overwork

What employers can do
- Mechanization: Automating tasks
- Job rotation: Moving between different tasks
- Teamwork: Distributing work more evenly
- Job enlargement: Increasing the variety of tasks

Symptoms
Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) do not happen overnight. Pain, joint stiffness, muscle tightness, redness, swelling of the affected area, numbness, “pins and needles” sensations, skin colour changes.

WATCH FOR SIGNS
- Pain
- Joint stiffness
- Muscle tightness
- Redness
- Swelling of the affected area
- Numbness
- “Pins and needles” sensations
- Skin colour changes

Being aware of the causes and developing a prevention program is essential. Inform and train workers, encourage early reporting of symptoms, and identify and control job-related risk factors.

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