**Tips for hazardous manual task training**

**For trainers:**

* Workers must be provided with information about how to do their job safely.
* This tip sheet is the minimum information that should be included in your workers’ hazardous manual task training. Read more about [hazardous manual tasks](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/injury-prevention-safety/hazardous-manual-tasks).
* Discuss the following sections and insert examples and photos from your workplace.

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| Hazardous manual tasks (HMT) are any manual tasks that have one or more risk factors which may cause a sprain or strain injury. They are preventable, yet the most common type of workplace injury.  **Risk factors**  There are six risk factors that lead to sprain and strain injuries. | | |
| ***Insert*** *photos of your workers doing tasks that have these risk factors (click example images to replace them).* | | |
| ***Training:*** *Discuss the work activities in your workplace that have one or more of these risk factors.* | | |
| Exertion/force |  | Very tiring work that takes a lot of effort. |
| Awkward postures |  | Postures that are uncomfortable or require significant bending, twisting or over-reaching that workers hold over a period of time. |
| Vibration |  | Sitting/standing on or holding vibrating equipment for a period of time. |
| Duration |  | Doing a task continuously for more than 30 minutes, or more than a total of two hours over a whole shift. |
| Repetition |  | Using the same parts of the body to repeat similar movements over and over. |
| Mental stress/work pressure |  | Mental stress and work pressure can increase the risk of physical injuries if not managed. |

**Causes of risk factors and how to prevent them**

## The four causes of sprain and strain risk factors are:

1. **Work areas** (e.g. benches that are too low, working in tight areas where you can’t freely move).
2. **What is being handled and how** (e.g. carrying a top-heavy container, handling objects with poor handles, pushing a trolley 100 metres up a slope, unloading pallets of stock for entire shifts).
3. **Environmental factors** (e.g. uneven/slippery floor surfaces, poor lighting, hot/cold/windy/humid weather).
4. **Work organisation** (e.g. time pressures, work pace, lack of communication, no proactive maintenance, poor support, very boring or overly mentally demanding work).

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| ***Training:*** *Discuss the above four causes of sprain and strain risk factors. Then discuss the examples provided below which illustrate the causes of the risk factors for three sample hazardous manual tasks.* |
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**Examples of risk factors and their causes**

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| Risk factor | | Source of risk – examples |
| Exertion/force |  | Force is caused by:   1. **Work area** - is a steep slope. 2. **What is being handled** - wheel barrow is heavy and overloaded. 3. **Environment** - ground may be slippery and uneven. 4. **Work organisation** - final destination for bricks is some distance away and involves manual pushing. |
| Awkward postures |  | Awkward postures are caused by:   1. **Work area** - working at ground level such as when tying steel, screeding concrete or tiling. |
| Vibration |  | Vibration is caused by:   1. **What is being handled** - jack hammer is a powered hand tool with high force from its weight. |

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| ***Training:*** *Now discuss what is causing the risk factors for the hazardous manual tasks identified in your workplace.* |

**Examples of controls**

To reduce the risk of sprain or strain injury consider:

* mechanical aids (e.g. robotics, trolleys, overhead cranes, forklifts, pallet jacks, pallet raisers)
* adjustable equipment (e.g. bench height, pallet raisers)
* clear access (allows use of mechanical aids)
* adequate space to conduct tasks
* adequate lighting
* maintenance of tools/equipment
* ground surface maintenance to ensure level and smoothness
* ensure access-ways are free of slip and trip hazards
* the way work is done (e.g. task variation, adequate work pace, time, staffing levels, resources, supervisor support)
* well defined communication
* specific safe work procedures that address HMT.

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| **Performing specific hazardous manual tasks safely** | | |
| ***Insert*** *examples of tasks in the table that are relevant to the workers attending training.* | | |
| ***Training:*** *Discuss the workplace tasks including the risk factors and the controls to minimise the risk of injury.* | | |
| **Hazardous manual task** (describe the task) | **Risk factors in the task** (exertion/force, awkward postures, vibration, duration, repetition, mental stress/work pressure) | **Controls used for the task as per the hierarchy of controls**  (mechanical aids, tools, equipment,  safe work procedures) |
| *Example: Pushing an overloaded wheelbarrow up a steep slope with a flat tyre* | *Example: High force with awkward posture and repeated several times during a shift* | *Example: Use forklift instead of wheelbarrow and provide workers with relevant training and information.*  *Maintain wheelbarrow and grade/ improve slope and surface to reduce exertion required* |
| *Example: Tie and install steel reo for footings or slabs.* | *Example: Awkward postures, and high force when carrying long reo bars* | *Example: Redesign footings (e.g. pad footings on top of ground), use prefabricated cages, reduce bar size and tie the chair to the steel while at workstation.* |
| *Example: Delivering six metre lengths of plasterboard to a two storey house* | *Example: High force with awkward posture and repeated several times during a shift* | *Example: Use telehandler or manitou in place of manually handling the plasterboard from truck to first floor location.* |
| *<Insert your workplace HMTS >* |  |  |

**Reporting**

Workplaces must have procedures for reporting hazards (including risk factors), faulty equipment, maintenance issues or any work-related symptoms including:

* pain, joint stiffness or muscle tightness
* swelling, numbness, pins and needles
* skin colour changes.

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| ***Insert*** information about your workplace procedures for reporting hazards, faults, maintenance issues and symptoms. | | |
| ***Training:*** *Discuss* with workers the importance of and procedures for reporting sprains and strains. | | |
| **Hazards** | **Procedure** |
| Faulty equipment | *List your workplace procedure here* |
| Maintenance | *List your workplace procedure here* |
| Work-related symptoms | *List your workplace procedure here* |

**Record of training**

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| Keep a record of any HMT training.  **Date of session**: *Click to choose a date* | | **Trainer**:*Enter name/s here* |
| **Topics covered**:*Enter topics here* | |  |
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| ***Insert*** information about your HMT training. | | |
| **Worker’s name** | **Worker’s signature** | |
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\**This factsheet is based on the Hazardous manual tasks Code of Practice.*