



CAPSC
Safety
Services
CANADA

Evolution of Ergonomics – Survival of the Fittest...

Soft Tissue Injury (STI)/Musculoskeletal Injury (MSI) Prevention Week
September 27 - October 3, 2009

Some people call being in-the-moment “mindfulness”. Others, “awareness”. Whatever you choose, being more in-the-moment at work can help prevent acute or sudden soft tissue/musculoskeletal injuries.

Acute or sudden STIs/MSIs are more likely to occur when people are distracted. As many who have suffered MSIs can attest to, these events can happen in an instant with one wrong move, a slight distraction or not keeping one’s mind on-task.

When we work, we need to be both physically and mentally present. We must be aware of where we are, what we are doing and how we are doing it – it is critical for injury prevention that we are not distracted. So much can go wrong if we do not concentrate or if we take our mind off the task.

A prime example of an acute MSI occurrence is using poor body mechanics while lifting. When most people are asked how they should lift a box, very few are unaware of the proper methods to manually lift a load. Yet ask someone to pick something up for you and they will likely bend over at the waist and pick it up. Many factors may contribute to this decision, but certainly one is that they do not accurately perceive the risk of injury.

And therein lies the challenge.

We must acknowledge that the risks for musculoskeletal injuries exist at every workplace, more so than those for shock, cuts, abrasions, head injuries and other common ailments. In fact, workplace injuries suggest we are more likely to experience an MSI than any other injury.

To prevent an MSI, we must be mentally and physically fit. We need to be in-the-moment. Our workplaces must have a strong safety culture. Even though ergonomics is evolving, we must continue to grow our knowledge and understanding of the topic if we want to be injury-free.

Together, we can make this evolution a revolution!

