

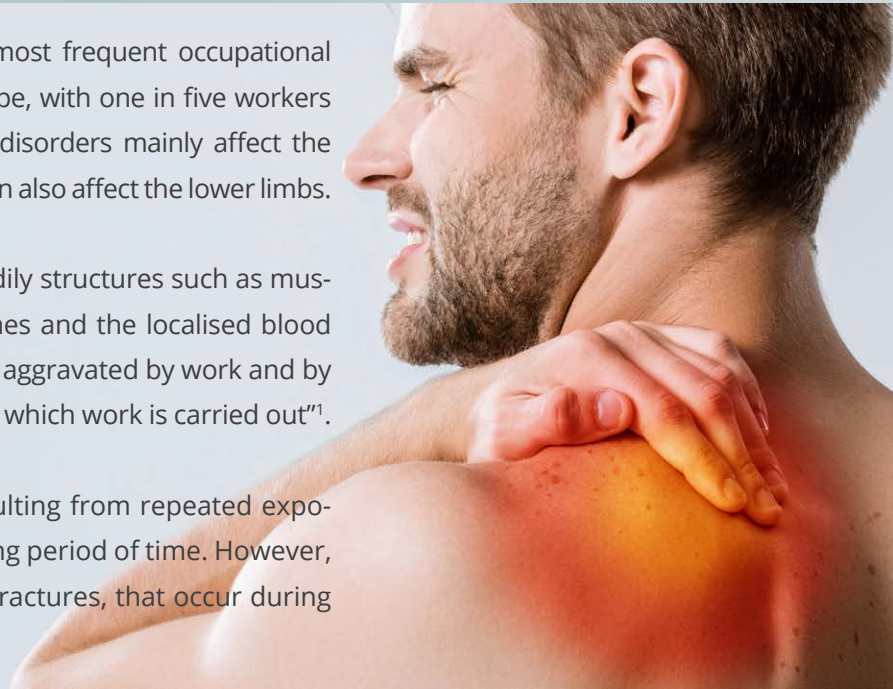


Musculoskeletal Disorders

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) are the most frequent occupational health problem affecting employees in Europe, with one in five workers suffering of various forms of MSDs. These disorders mainly affect the back, neck, shoulders and upper limbs, but can also affect the lower limbs.

Work-related MSDs are “impairments of bodily structures such as muscles, joints, tendons, ligaments, nerves, bones and the localised blood circulation system”. They may be “caused or aggravated by work and by the effects of the immediate environment in which work is carried out”¹.

Most MSDs are “cumulative disorders, resulting from repeated exposure to high or low intensity loads over a long period of time. However, MSDs can also be acute traumas, such as fractures, that occur during an accident”².



Why is it important to tackle MSDs at workplace?



Musculoskeletal disorders are very frequent in Europe, with more than 20% of Europeans developing such a disorder in their lifetime and conditions and activities in some workplaces may be an important cause for MSDs. These disorders cause physical suffering and sometimes incapacitate people to work. Therefore, they have a direct impact on personal lives and families, as well as on companies' income. Moreover, MSDs are frequently chronic disorders that tend to affect people over the years.

Consequently, MSDs have to be tackled in an integrated approach that prevents the development of new disorders, as well as the rehabilitation and reintegration of workers affected by MSDs.

¹71 Facts – European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2007.

²Idem.



What can we do? ^{3, 4}

What managers need to know?

- Be aware of and understand the importance of musculo-skeletal health,
- Know how to communicate with and support employees,
- Know what support is available if someone has a problem,
- Know their health and safety responsibilities and understand how to implement health and safety protocols and risk assessment tools,
- Encourage employees to take breaks, move, stretch,
- Have shorter meetings when sitting.



What workers need to know?

- Avoid harmful or damaging habits.
- Avoid risks where possible and follow safe practices.
- Avoid prolonged static postures, sedentary behaviour or repetitive movements.
- Keep physically active, maintain an ideal weight, have a balanced diet and avoid smoking or excess alcohol
- Work processes need to minimize these risks and recognize that employees with musculo-skeletal conditions may be more susceptible

Good practices in managing chronic MSDs should include:

- Early intervention,
- Access to support mechanisms including occupational health and rehabilitation,
- Good communication between the worker and the organisation,
- Flexibility in working hours and on the journey to work,
- Ensuring good ergonomics practice is in place in the organisation.

Practicalities regarding sitting for workers

- Spend less time sitting,
- Move when sitting,
- Get up regularly and stretch.

³ Woolf, Anthony (2020), Working with chronic MSDs: what interventions are the most effective?, presentation given on 22 October 2020 at the Musculoskeletal disorders prevalence, prevention and policy. What have we learnt? Evidence from EU-OSHA research European Agency for Safety and Health at Work.

⁴ Copsey, Sarah (2020), MSDs and prolonged sitting, presentation given on 22 October 2020 at the Musculoskeletal disorders prevalence, prevention and policy. What have we learnt? Evidence from EU-OSHA research European Agency for Safety and Health at Work.



Examples

National Examples (non exhaustive list):

- Bundesverband Mineralische Rohstoffe (MIRO), Germany:**

Our German colleagues organize a yearly award competition that includes a grant for the winners, as well as a specific category which is called 'Ergonomic':



https://www.bgrci-foerderpreis.de/foerderpreis/downloads/F-Preis_2018_Brosch_72dpi_Nominierungen.pdf - 2018

https://www.bgrci-foerderpreis.de/foerderpreis/downloads/F-Preis_2014_Brosch_72dpi.pdf - 2014



https://www.bgrci-foerderpreis.de/foerderpreis/downloads/F-Preis_2015_Brosch_72dpi.pdf - 2015

https://www.bgrci-foerderpreis.de/foerderpreis/downloads/F-Preis_2012_Brosch_72dpi.pdf - 2012



- Federación de Áridos (FdA), Spain:**

A series of good practices to improve the health of workers, focused on ergonomics can be found in the following good practice guides:



Prevencción de riesgos laborales en plantas de tratamineto de áridos – ANEFA

Prevencción de riesgos laborales en trabajos de mantenimiento en canteras, graveras y plantas de tratamiento de aridos - ANEFA

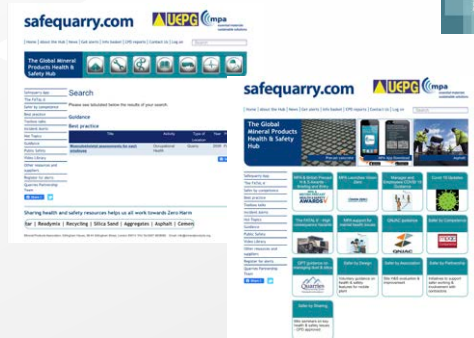


- Mineral Products Association (MPA), United Kingdom:**

Developed an "Occupational Health Information Sheet" on MSDs:

<https://www.safequarry.com/Search.aspx?Search=musculoskeletal>

Safequarry.com



- Associazione Nazionale Estrattori Produttori Lapedei ed Affini (ANEPLA), Italy:**

Relevant sources for tackling MSDs from Italy:



<https://www.puntosicuro.it/sicurezza-C-80/pubbliredazionale-C-119/parc-prevenire-i-disturbi-muscoloscheletrici-sul-posto-di-lavoro-AR-19447>

<https://www.puntosicuro.it/sicurezza-sul-lavoro-C-1/tipologie-di-rischio-C-5/movimenti-ripetitivi-sovraccarico-C-43/comprendere-i-dms-con-napo-AR-19464/>



<https://www.parcfor.com/>





Find out more

EU-OSHA

EU-OSHA is going to organize a campaign on Musculoskeletal Disorders, and the details could be found here:

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/themes/musculoskeletal-disorders>



EU law

Framework Directive: 89/391/EEC Council Directive of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:01989L0391-20081211> (23 languages).

Directive: 89/654/EEC of 30 November 1989 of 30 November 1989 concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for the workplace (first individual directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31989L0654> (23 languages).

Directive: 89/655/EEC of 30 November 1989 concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for the use of work equipment by workers at work (second individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A31989L0655> (23 languages).

Directive: 89/656/EEC of 30 November 1989 on the minimum health and safety requirements for the use by workers of personal protective equipment at the workplace (third individual directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:01989L0656-20070627> (23 languages).

Directive: 90/269/EEC - manual handling of loads of 29 May 1990 on the minimum health and safety requirements for the manual handling of loads where there is a risk particularly of back injury to workers (fourth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC): <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A31990L0269> (23 languages).

Directive: 90/270/EEC of 29 May 1990 on the minimum safety and health requirements for work with display screen equipment (fifth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC): <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31990L0270> (23 languages).

Directive: 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organization of working time: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32003L0088> (23 languages).

Directive: 2006/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on machinery, and amending Directive 95/16/EC: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32006L0042> (23 languages).

Directive: 2009/104/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for the use of work equipment by workers at work (second individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32009L0104> (23 languages).