

STAY SAFE WITH SOCIETY

ERGONOMICS FOR THE HAND, WRIST, AND ARM

Ergonomics is the study of the relationship between people and their work environment, and it is very important to your health and safety. Good ergonomics adapt the job to fit the person, rather than forcing the person to fit the job.

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) are one of the fastest-growing occupational illnesses. MSDs develop over long periods of time. They are painful, sometimes even crippling conditions that affect nerves, tendons, tendon sheaths, and muscles, especially in the arms, hands and wrists.

Risk factors for MSDs of the arm, hand and wrist are:

- Repetitive activities that require the same motion, over and over. The longer you repeat the same movement, the greater the risk.
- Forceful exertions, particularly with the hands. The combination of repetitive motion and force, such as pushing on a tool over and over, increases your risk.
- Staying in the same position, whether sitting or standing, for an extended time.
- Awkward body postures, such as reaching above your shoulders, behind your back, or twisting your wrists to perform tasks.
- Continued physical contact between hands or arms and a work surface or surface edge.
- Excessive power tool vibration.
- Hand tools that either don't fit the job or don't fit the hand.

Checklist:

- Keep your elbows down on the work surface instead of leaning on your elbows.
- Work with your palms down.
- Work with your wrists straight, not bent.
- Shift positions occasionally; don't sit or stand for too long of a stretch.
- Perform tasks with two hands rather than one when possible.
- Grip objects with your whole hand and your fingers -- a power grip -- in order to distribute the force over a larger area of your hand.
- Avoid applying pressure to a tool with the center of your palm.



**GOOD ERGONOMICS
ADAPT THE JOB TO FIT
THE PERSON, RATHER
THAN FORCING THE
PERSON TO FIT THE JOB.**

A Small Detail
That Can Make a
Big Difference.

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This information is advisory, and it must not be assumed that it has detected all unsafe acts or conditions. This information is designed to assist you in recognizing potential safe work problems and not to establish compliance with any law, rule or regulation.

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