



HEALTH HIT QUESTIONS OCTOBER 2009

1. What is Ergonomics?
 - a. The study of lifting
 - b. The science of fitting the worker to the workplace
 - c. The study of workers
 - d. The science of preventing Work-related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WMSD's)
2. What can help to prevent WMSD's?
 - a. Adjusting the height of the work surface
 - b. Varying tasks
 - c. Taking short rest and stretching breaks
 - d. All of the above
3. What is the 1st thing you should do if you experience pain while working?
 - a. Get up and move around
 - b. Call your doctor
 - c. Let your employer know
 - d. Turn off your computer
4. When lifting patients it is potentially hazardous to lift alone.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. When lifting patients you should tighten your stomach muscles as they will support your back.
 - a. True
 - b. False

ERGONOMICS AND THE WORKPLACE

What is Ergonomics?

Ergonomics is the science of fitting the job to the worker. When there is a mismatch between the physical requirements of the job and the physical capacity of the worker, **work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs)** can result. Workers who repeat the same motion throughout their workday, are under stress, do their work in awkward positions, use a great deal of force to perform their jobs, repeatedly lift heavy objects, or face a combination of these risk factors are most likely to develop WMSDs. (OSHA)

Prevention

Work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs) can be prevented by simple and inexpensive changes in the workplace. Adjusting the height of work surfaces, adding supportive equipment such as articulating keyboard trays, and varying tasks for workers are a few of the ways to eliminate stress on the body at the work station. Performing stretching exercises at your work station, exercising regularly, and encouraging short rest breaks can also reduce risks.

Lifting

The greatest ergonomic risk to healthcare workers is back injury due to frequent repetitive movements. Poor posture and unsafe lifting techniques place extra stress on the back. Most back injuries occur when reaching upward or when twisting. For this reason it is imperative that personnel required to lift and move patients or clients do so with proper technique. Lifting smoothly, with the patient as close to you as possible, reduces the stress on the back.

The Salus, Inc. October Seminar Series will focus on the right tools for the right job. Do you experience back pain when shoveling snow or wrist pain during home fix-it projects? Let Licensed Athletic Trainer, Ross Koehler, show you the right tools to use to avoid aches and pains that may land you in the doctor's office.



Recommendations for a Safe Workstation

1. Let your employer know if you experience pain while working at your station.
2. Use a supportive chair and sit back allowing the backrest to support you.
3. Position the top of the monitor at eye level.
4. Position the monitor to avoid glare on the screen.
5. Sit with at least an arms length of distance away from the monitor.
6. Keep feet flat on the floor or add a footrest for support.
7. Use a document holder that is at the same height as the computer monitor.
8. Position your phone within reach and use speakerphone or a headset when use of phone is continuous.
9. Arms and elbows should remain close to the body.
10. Center the monitor and keyboard directly in front of you, not off to a side.
11. Use an articulating keyboard tray that allows for a negative tilt position (slanted away from you). Tray should never be positioned in a positive tilt (slanted towards you).
12. Take frequent short breaks to reduce muscle fatigue and to allow for blood flow into overused areas. Stretches are recommended during short breaks, and at least every hour.

Lifting Guidelines

13. Avoid lifting patients when alone or off balance. Use teams or mechanical assistance, especially when a patient has fallen or is in an awkward position.
14. Lift loads close to the body and avoid heavy lifting when the spine is rotated.
15. Tighten stomach muscles to protect your back and lift smoothly, without jerking.