

▶ What Are Your Responsibilities?

Managers and Supervisors

- ▲ Be aware of ergonomic risks and prevention strategies.
- ▲ Provide ergonomic training to staff.
- ▲ Encourage input from staff into ergonomic problem-solving.
- ▲ Provide appropriate ergonomic furniture and tools.
- ▲ Implement ergonomic improvements.
- ▲ Promote healthy work patterns (i.e. incorporate breaks and job rotation for repetitive tasks).
- ▲ Encourage staff to report symptoms early.
- ▲ Send employees for medical treatment.
- ▲ Implement work restrictions and job modification.
- ▲ Seek assistance when necessary.

Faculty and Staff

- ▲ Participate in ergonomic training and problem solving.
- ▲ Listen to your body and adjust your furniture and tools to support comfortable and safe postures.
- ▲ Think before you lift, get help if necessary and follow safe guidelines.
- ▲ Vary your job tasks throughout the day and take frequent stretch breaks during repetitive tasks.
- ▲ Exercise and stay fit.
- ▲ Report work-related injuries to your supervisor promptly.
- ▲ Follow work restrictions.
- ▲ Seek assistance when necessary.

▶ How Do I Get Help?

Contact the Industrial Hygiene Division at Environment, Health & Safety:

Visit our website at <http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ergo>
OR send email to EHSIH@ucsd.edu

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA Environment Health & Safety ERGONOMICS PROGRAM

p r e s e n t s

what IS ERGONOMICS AND why IS IT IMPORTANT?



▶ What is ergonomics... and why is it important?

Ergonomics is the science of fitting jobs to people. It focuses on designing workstations, tools and work tasks for safety, efficiency and comfort. Effective ergonomic design reduces discomfort and injuries and increases job satisfaction and productivity.

▶ What are common job injuries that can be reduced with good ergonomics?

Injuries affecting muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves and discs can be reduced or eliminated with ergonomics. These injuries are frequently called **musculoskeletal disorders** (MSD's), **repetitive strain injuries** (RSI's), and **cumulative trauma disorders** (CTD's).

▶ What are the common ergonomic risk factors?

- ▲ **Awkward body postures:** maintaining an awkward, unsupported or fixed posture such as bending, reaching or twisting for prolonged periods.
- ▲ **Excessive repetition:** doing the same motions over and over again.
- ▲ **Excessive force:** physical exertion or pressure on any part of the body while lifting, pushing, pulling or gripping a tool.
- ▲ **Contact stress:** pressure by tools, edges or hard surfaces on soft tissues of the body. The palms and elbows are often at high risk.
- ▲ **Vibration:** using vibrating or impact tools and equipment.

Some risk factors have nothing to do with work and can include medical conditions such as **rheumatoid arthritis**, **diabetes** and **hormonal imbalances**, as well as **hobbies** involving repetitive motions or awkward postures.

▶ What are common symptoms of musculoskeletal disorders?

Symptoms frequently include:

- ▲ **Pain**
- ▲ **Numbness and tingling**
- ▲ **Stiffness or cramping**
- ▲ **Inability to hold objects or loss of strength**

Symptoms that go away overnight are usually a sign of fatigue. Symptoms that don't go away may indicate a more serious problem. Employees who have such symptoms should seek medical advice early. MSD's are easier to treat in the early stages. Ignoring them can result in serious injury.

▶ How can the Ergonomics Program help me learn more about ergonomics?

The Ergonomics Program includes a range of services to help departments prevent MSD's and comply with federal and state standards.



▲ Training Programs

- Computer ergonomics training
- Back safety and body mechanics training
- Specialized training for non-computer environments, such as jobs involving tool use or lifting

▲ Ergonomic worksite evaluations

- Computer workstation evaluations for all faculty and staff
- Worksite evaluations in laboratories, cafeterias, environmental services, etc.
- Post-injury worksite evaluations for injured or disabled employees

▲ Assistance with making ergonomic modifications

- Ergonomics Lab for evaluation and selection of equipment
- Loaner pool of equipment for evaluation prior to purchase
- Interest-free loan program for the purchase of ergonomic equipment