

TIPS to Prevent Repetitive Work

The same muscles are used over and over again in repetitive work.

Repeated forceful movements – especially in awkward postures – increase the risk of injury.

To reduce your risk of injury, PRACTICE THESE TIPS . . .

- Reduce the number of times that luggage is handled, e.g., leave luggage on a cart for short-term storage. It's important that enough carts are made available to do this.
- Vary your technique to use different muscles, such as alternating between left and right hands.
- Vary your activities and pace repetitive tasks. Take a few minutes to do something that uses different muscles.
- Take “micro pauses”.

Micro Pause

- Let muscles rest by pausing for 5 to 10 seconds.
- Return to an upright posture and let your arms hang loosely by your sides.

This pamphlet contains general information about tasks that contribute to musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) such as sprains and strains. A musculoskeletal injury (MSI) prevention program is the responsibility of the employer. For further information, see sections 4.47 – 4.58 of the Occupational Health & Safety Regulation and the WorkSafeBC publications “Understanding the Risks of Musculoskeletal Injury (MSI): An educational guide for workers on sprains, strains, and other MSIs” and “Preventing Musculoskeletal Injury (MSI): A guide for employers and joint committees”.

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WorkSafeBC Prevention Information Line

The WorkSafeBC Prevention Information Line can answer your questions about workplace health and safety, worker and employer responsibilities, and reporting a workplace incident. The Prevention Information Line accepts anonymous calls.

Phone 604 276-3100 in the Lower Mainland, or call 1 888 621-SAFE (7233) toll-free in B.C.

To report after-hours and weekend incidents and emergencies, call 604 273-7711 or toll-free 1 866 922-4357.

ERGONOMIC TIPS

for the Hospitality Industry



Preventing Injuries when
Handling Luggage

WORK SAFE BC

What is Ergonomics?

Many of the ways we work – such as lifting, reaching, or repeating the same movements – may strain our bodies and lead to injuries.

Ergonomics prevents these types of injuries by fitting the job to the person using proper equipment and work practices. This results in the safest way to work and prevents workplace injuries.

The high number of sprains and strains (musculoskeletal injuries – MSIs) in the hospitality industry concerns employers, workers, and the Workers' Compensation Board (WorkSafeBC).

Employers must provide equipment and establish safe work practices to reduce the risks of sprains and strains (MSI). Employers must also instruct workers in these safe work practices. Workers must follow employers' instructions to protect themselves.

Working together, employers and workers can prevent many sprain and strain type injuries (MSIs).

Risk Factors

Many jobs have risks that can lead to sprain and strain injuries (MSIs). If we are aware of the risk factors, we may be able to change how we do our jobs and prevent injuries.

This pamphlet explains some of the risks of handling luggage, and provides tips on work practices to prevent injuries.

Prevention is the best policy.

TIPS to Prevent Awkward Postures

Our bodies function best in comfortable (neutral) postures. Awkward body postures increase the stress on ligaments and joints. This can lead to fatigue and discomfort, and increase the risk of injury.

Handling luggage, particularly when loading and unloading from vehicles, carts, and storage areas, often results in awkward back postures for bell services staff.

Example of an awkward back posture



You may not feel pain or discomfort when in risky postures, but the potential for injury is still present.

Be aware of your posture when you work.

To reduce your risk of injury, PRACTICE THESE TIPS . . .

Plan your lift

- Think about your lift first, then do it.
- Move your feet to face the load. Don't twist your body.
- When lifting bags from a car trunk, face the trunk squarely with both feet firmly on the ground.

Example of improved posture



- Get close to the load before lifting. For example, pull bags that are in the back of the trunk close to you first.
- Bend your knees, not your back.

Organize luggage storage

- Store large items upright at low levels.
- Store smaller items at waist height.
- Avoid storing anything above shoulder level.

TIPS to Prevent High Muscle Forces

Muscles produce force to move or hold a posture. High forces can result in injury.

High forces are required to lift, lower, carry, push, or pull heavy objects, especially in awkward postures. High forces are also required to hold a posture, especially for long periods.

To reduce your risk of injury, PRACTICE THESE TIPS . . .

- Lift heavy items using a dolly or ask a buddy for help.
- Use a cart to eliminate the need to carry luggage long distances.
- Push rather than pull carts.
- When pushing a cart, place your hands just below shoulder level on the cart handle.
- Ensure carts are maintained properly.
- Tires should be fully inflated and the wheels should not be bent or misaligned. This will decrease the amount of force required to push the cart.
- Report faulty carts to your supervisor.
- Vary your position or switch to another task to avoid holding postures for long periods.
- Wear substantial shoes with non-slip soles and enough cushioning to relieve the stress on your knees and back when you are on your feet for long periods.