

## Primary Risk Factors

Posted in: Ergonomics Early Intervention

Research has identified specific risk factors that correspond to an increased likelihood of developing pain or injuries at work. The three most common risk factors should be minimized whenever possible:

### Risk Factor 1: Force and Working Distance

- ✓ Loads are magnified when held away from our bodies.
- ✓ The weight of our body is a significant load when leaning forward.

### Risk Factor 2: Awkward Postures

- ✓ Working in awkward postures can lead to muscle imbalances and joint damage.
- ✓ Do you feel balanced when you work or do you feel the overloaded in one body part?
- ✓ Simple tactics like positioning your work between waist and shoulder level can pay immediate dividends.

### Risk Factor 3: Static Postures

- ✓ Contracting a muscle for more than 20 seconds without rest reduces blood flow, accelerates fatigue and can cause discomfort.
- ✓ Do you 'push through' to get the job done or do you pace yourself?

### The Worst Case. All of the above.

- ✓ When there is more than one risk factor, the likelihood of an injury dramatically increases.

As a start – scan your workplace for tasks that involve a lot of force and awkward postures. Chances are you will find pain or injuries nearby.



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