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Symptoms of RSI's

- ❖ Mild to severe pain
- ❖ Tenderness
- ❖ Swelling
- ❖ Stiffness
- ❖ Tingling or numbness
- ❖ Throbbing
- ❖ Weakness
- ❖ Sensitivity to cold or heat

Treatments

- ❖ Rest, ice, compression, and elevation
- ❖ Anti-inflammatory drugs
- ❖ Exercise, physical therapy
- ❖ Wrapping or splinting area to rest the muscles
- ❖ Surgery

This month's newsletter is a little late, thank you for your patience. Any suggestions for future newsletter topics are welcomed.

Burn Awareness

February is burn awareness month. Burns, even minor ones, can be very painful, and can happen anywhere at any time, in the home and in the workplace. There are three classifications of burns;

1. First degree burns are superficial, often red and painful but have no blistering. Most 1st degree burns can be self-treated. Immediately cool the affected area with cool water (not cold) or compress for at least 10 minutes. Do not apply oils, lotions, creams or ice as they may cause further damage or infection. Apply a petroleum based ointment two to three times daily.

Loosely keep the area covered with a non-stick sterile bandage to protect it as it heals.

2. Second degree burns are also red and painful but also have blistering and swelling, and may ooze. Remove any jewelry or tight clothing as burns may swell quickly.

3. Third degree burns are deep and may appear leathery or charred looking with patches of white, brown or black.

Immediately seek medical attention for 2nd or 3rd degree burns to ensure the proper care. Doctor's can test burn severity, prescribe antibiotics and pain medications, and administer a tetanus shot, if needed.

Take the proper precautions, be aware of your environment and use the proper PPE to prevent burns before they happen

Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSI)

A repetitive strain injury (RSI), sometimes referred to as a repetitive stress injury, is a gradual buildup of damage to muscles, tendons, and/or nerves from repeated use of a body part such as your shoulder, elbow, forearm, wrist, or hand. All occupations are at risk, not just office workers or assembly line workers, There are many types of RSI's but the most common include;

1. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome - inflammation at the wrist leading to pinching or twisting of the median nerve running through the wrist.

2. Epicondylitis - inflammation of the spot where a tendon attaches to the bone.

3. Bursitis - inflammation and swelling of the fluid filled sac around knee, elbow or shoulder joints.

4. Rotator cuff tendonitis - swelling of the tendons connecting the muscles and bones in the shoulder.

5. Back Strain - stressful, repetitive motions that cause the back muscles to tighten or tear over time.

Several tips to help prevent repetitive strain injuries include;

1. Stretch before you work

2. Adjust work station and area if possible to be more ergonomic

3. Utilize ergonomic tools and PPE

3. Get up and move around, or stretch, if that's not possible, march in place, change positions

4. Maintain good posture and a healthy diet



How can employees protect themselves

Nothing can guarantee employees safety from violence but there are steps to reduce the odds

- Learn how to recognize potential situations so they can be avoided or diffused.
- Alert any concerns to supervisors or management before they become an issue.
- Report all incidents immediately, if you see something, say something.
- Avoid traveling alone into unfamiliar locations or situations whenever possible.
- Avoid confrontations by treating all co-workers, customers and visitors with courtesy, kindness and respect.



Workplace Violence

February is workplace violence awareness month. Some 2 million American workers are victims of workplace violence each year. The CDC defines workplace violence as any “act or threat of violence, ranging from verbal abuse to physical assaults directed toward persons at work or on duty.” It can be caused by co-workers, contractors, customers, or former employees, and it can happen anywhere inside or outside of the business or company.

What can employers do to help protect their employees?

1. Create violence, harassment, and bullying prevention policies. Clearly define unacceptable behavior and establish a zero-tolerance approach.
2. Provide guidelines for reporting incidents, and outline disciplinary measures. Communicate it to all employees and regularly review and update them to ensure their effectiveness and alignment with evolving workplace dynamics. Provide multiple avenues for reporting, such as anonymous hotlines or online reporting systems, to accommodate different preferences and comfort levels.
3. Secure the workplace. Where appropriate to the business, install video surveillance, extra lighting, alarm systems, and security guards.
4. Minimize access by outsiders through identification badges, electronic keys or pins, and visitor sign in procedures.
5. Use communication channels. In dangerous situations, effective communication channels are critical. Employers should utilize emergency communication tools and systems to disseminate timely information to employees, such as emergency tones or announcements over a paging system to quickly alert and guide employees during a crisis.
6. Perform regular risk assessments. Assessments should evaluate training completion rates, adherence to policies, and any gaps in preventive measures. Organizations can proactively address vulnerabilities and take corrective actions to enhance safety protocols.
7. Foster a culture of diversity, inclusion and respect to create a safer work environment.
8. Maintain a healthy workplace by fostering a professional and caring culture that promotes open communication, work-life balance, and development opportunities. Implementing employee well-being programs and provide resources for mental health support, such as counseling services or other employee assistance programs can contribute to a positive and safe work environment.



OSHA has various publications, standards, technical assistance and compliance tools to help you, and offers extensive assistance through it's many safety and health programs. Visit OSHA's website at www.osha.gov for mor information.

Ultimately, it's up to each individual to follow and apply these guidelines and practice safety!