

## Overexertion

Overexertion: when a person works beyond his/her physical capacity and tolerances

### Risk Factors:

- Exerting Excessive Force – lifting/pushing/pulling heavy items
- Awkward Posture – using positions that place stress on the body
- High Repetition – continually or frequently repeating the same motion or series of motions
- Local Contact Stress – pressing the body or part of the body against hard or sharp edges
- Cold – cold may increase the potential for MSDs to develop
- Vibration – vibration can cause damage to the body and greatly increase the force exerted for a task, such as causing a worker to lose feeling in the hands and arms

### Safe Work Practices:

- Plan any lift prior to beginning work
- Require heavy loads to be carried by at least two people
- Reduce the weight of a load to limit force exertion
- Use devices to lift and reposition heavy objects (forklifts, pallet trucks, trolleys, etc.)
- Rotate workers to minimize repetitive motions
- Keep body in a **neutral position**: minimal stress is on the body and joints are aligned
  - Reposition a work table to eliminate a long/excessive reach and enable working in neutral postures
- Keep objects in the safe lifting zone: **between waist and shoulder height**
- Change working position throughout the day
- Regularly stand up, walk around, and stretch to reduce fatigue
- Push rather than pull whenever possible
- Use proper PPE to:
  - Minimize contact stress (knee pads and other padding)
  - Minimize vibration (vibration-dampening gloves, selecting tools with the least vibration)
  - Protect from cold (properly-fitted thermal gloves)
- Ask for help

### Use Proper Lifting Techniques:

- Position yourself close to the load
- Spread your feet shoulder-width apart
- Keep your knees bent and your back straight
- Tighten your stomach muscles
- Lift using the large muscles of your **legs**
- Avoid twisting while lifting

### Signs of Injury:

- Pain with or without restriction in movement,
- Swelling and tenderness,
- Reduced range of motion and/or stiffness, and
- Tingling and/or numbness.