

Safety Alert



SUBJECT: Are you sitting comfortably – the sequel

RECIPIENTS: All Council Services

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Musculoskeletal Conditions

Employers must protect workers from the risks of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) being caused or made worse by work. MSDs include injuries and conditions that can affect the back, joints and limbs. You:

- can do things to prevent or minimise the risk of your workers (and others who may be affected by what they do) developing MSDs
- cannot prevent all MSDs, so early reporting of symptoms, proper treatment and suitable rehabilitation are essential.



The parts of the body most likely to be affected by MSDs are:

- the lower back
- shoulders, forearms, wrists and hands, as well as the neck
- the hips, legs, knees, ankles and feet.

Workers can have different kinds of MSDs at the same time.

Causes of musculoskeletal disorders

There are risk factors causing MSDs in many types of work, so you should think about the risks of various tasks, depending on the work you do:

- bending, crouching or stooping
- lifting heavy or bulky loads
- pushing, pulling or dragging heavy loads
- stretching, twisting and reaching
- repetitive work, particularly using the same hand or arm action
- sustained or excessive force
- carrying out a task for a long time
- working with display screen equipment
- working with hand-held power tools for a long time
- driving heavy vehicles, long-distance driving or driving over rough ground

Or the risk factors can be to do with the work environment or organisation:

- poor working environment (including temperature and lighting)
- poor work organisation (including work pressure, job demands and lack of work breaks).

Stress and other psychosocial factors can contribute to the risk of developing MSDs.

Or they can be to do with the workers themselves:

- a recent or existing injury or health condition may make them more vulnerable
- individual differences (some workers are more affected by certain risks)
- vulnerable groups, for example, young people, disabled workers, pregnant workers, those new to the job
- working beyond their capability
- working when physically tired

[Source: Health & Safety Executive]

Information and Guidance

Health & Safety Bulletin

HSB 94 – [Are you sitting comfortably](#)

LCC POEL Guidance

- [POEL 9B – Chair set up and adjustment](#)
- [POEL 9C – Desk layout](#)
- [POEL 9D – Caring for your back](#)
- [POEL 9E – Exercise & Well-being](#)
- [POEL 9F – Working with laptop](#)
- [POEL 9G – Sit to stand desks](#)
- [POEL 9H – Tablets & mobile devices](#)
- [POEL 9I – Using a mouse](#)
- [POEL 9J - Keyboards](#)
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LCC Guidance

- [Working from Home Guidance](#)

LCC Training

- [Display Screen Equipment Awareness](#)
- [Manual Handling](#)

Chartered Institute of Ergonomic & Human Factor

[Interactive infographic on working from home and maintaining good MSK Health](#)

Public Health England

[Musculoskeletal Health: applying All Our Health](#)