

Sprains and Strains Most Common Injuries, Says Poll Results



Safety professionals spend a lot of time worrying about preventing traumatic injuries in the workplace, such as amputations from limbs getting caught in machinery or fractures from falls from heights.

But when we asked you what the most common type of injury/illness in your workplace was, those kinds of injuries weren't at the top of the list. Instead, 52% said that musculoskeletal injuries, i.e. strains and sprains, were most common. The other common injuries:

- 34% said hand/arm injuries
- 9% said injuries to the back or torso
- 5% said seasonal illness, such as heat exhaustion or the flu.

What's frustrating about musculoskeletal injuries leading the pack is that such injuries may be avoided by making simple and often inexpensive ergonomics-related changes to work stations, tools, processes, etc.

In fact, having a participatory ergonomics program can not only prevent these kinds of injuries but also save the company money. (Read about an Ontario textile plant that saved almost \$300,000 with such a program.)

For more information, case studies and tools on ergonomics and musculoskeletal injuries, go to the OHS Insider's Ergonomics Compliance Centre, where you'll find, among other things:

- 7 strategies for making your ergonomics program a success
- The ergonomics requirements in the OHS laws
- Information to help you justify investing in ergonomics to senior management
- An ergonomic risk factor checklist
- Model Worker MSI Symptoms Survey.

For videos, safety talks and other training material on ergonomics, go to SafetySmart. Not a subscriber to SafetySmart? Sign up for a free trial.

You can also buy a S.A.F.E. System on ergonomics, which includes posters, a

safety meeting outline, table tents and safety cards for workers.

As to seasonal illnesses, which the poll found were also fairly common, go to the Heat Stress Compliance Centre and Pandemic & Flu Planning Compliance Centre.