

Hazard Recognition: Ergonomics

May 2015

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Daily Safety and Health Topics

May 2015

Focus on Hazard Recognition:

Ergonomics



May 1, 2015

Safety Focus

WHAT IS ERGO?

Merriam-Webster defines ergonomics as “the applied science concerned with the designing and arranging of things people use in order to improve efficiency and safety.” This is a broad topic, and every part of the body is affected by the ergonomic design of the workplace. Factors include:

- The amount of repetition involved with the job.
- The duration of applied force from pushing, pulling, lifting or gripping.
- The amount of force exerted or the weight of the load.
- A person’s posture, reach and grip positions.
- Heights and distances to working surfaces, materials and supplies.
- Age, physical stature, weight, physical ability.

Injuries resulting from poor ergonomic design are sometimes acute, such as sprains, but are often cumulative such as carpal tunnel syndrome.

Health Tip of the Day

SHRUG OFF SHOULDER TENSION

Some people react to stress with increased muscle tension in their neck and shoulders. Progressive muscle relaxation, which involves tensing and relaxing of key muscle groups, can help. Shoulder shrugs are an example of this technique and an easy exercise that can be done almost anywhere, anytime to help relax these muscles. Sit up tall with shoulders back and arms at your side. Lift up your shoulders into an "I don't know" position, hold for two seconds, and then release them. Let your shoulders fall down as far from your ears as possible.

D&I Focus

The freedom of thought is a sacred right of every individual man, and diversity will continue to increase with the progress, refinement, and differentiation of the human intellect. - *Felix Adler*

Today is... [May Day](#)

May 2, 2015

Safety Focus

PREVENTING SPRAINS

A sprain is an injury to a ligament, the tough, fibrous tissue that connects bones to other bones. Sprain injuries involve a stretching or tearing of this tissue. Ankle, knee and wrist injuries account for the majority of sprains. To minimize the chances of sprains:

1. Practice safety measures to prevent falls. For example, practice safe housekeeping by keeping work areas clear of clutter.
2. Avoid strenuous activity on the job when tired or in pain.
3. Use extra caution when working on slippery surfaces such as ice or wet floors.
4. Use extra caution when walking across uneven surfaces. You could easily twist an ankle or knee.
5. When stepping off ladders, always look where you are placing your feet before you put your full weight on them.
6. Maintain a strong Questioning Attitude about the task you are engaged in.

Health Tip of the Day

BUDDY UP FOR BETTER STRETCHING

When done properly, working with a partner can be a great way to stretch your muscles. A partner can often help you get a more complete stretch than you can get on your own. A disadvantage is that the partner does not feel what you feel. To reduce the risk of injury, make sure that your partner stretches your muscles at a slow, steady pace and that you communicate with him or her. Stop immediately if you feel significant strain or pain.

D&I Focus

All human beings have great potential, seeing it, using it and appreciating it is the highest and best use as a leader.

Today is... [Brothers and Sisters Day](#)

May 3, 2015

Safety Focus

PREVENTING STRAINS

A strain is an injury to either a muscle or a tendon, the tissue that connects muscles to bones. Back injuries are the most prevalent in regard to strains. Depending on the severity of the injury, a strain may be a simple overstretch of the muscle or tendon, or it can result in a partial or complete tear. To minimize the possibility of incurring strains, observe the following practices:

1. First: Use S.T.A.R. (STOP, THINK, ACT, REVIEW)
2. Whenever possible, arrange your work areas to minimize the amount of heavy lifting required.
3. Before any heavy lifting activity, always warm up, using moderate stretching exercises. Do not stretch aggressively as you may over-stretch and injure yourself.
4. Always plan the lift. If possible, lift objects in the “power zone.” This is the area between mid-thigh and mid-chest height. Avoid lifting objects outside this zone.
5. Always carry objects close to your body.
6. Always lift slowly and smoothly, lifting with your legs and not your back.
7. Avoid twisting. Turn the whole body as one unit when changing direction while carrying a heavy object.
8. Always stand close to the object that you are lifting and be certain that fingers and toes are clear when setting it down.

Health Tip of the Day

EXERCISE FOR GOOD HEALTH

If you are struggling to get the recommended 2½ hours of physical activity each week, consider starting with shorter bouts and work your way up. Start with 10-15 minutes at a time. Once you feel comfortable, add a little more time to your routine. Every little bit can make a difference in your health!

D&I Focus

The differences between each of us make us stronger, while our similarities make us united.

Today is... [World Press Freedom Day](#)

May 4, 2015

Safety Focus

ABOVE SHOULDER WORKING HEIGHTS

Working above shoulder height and at workstations that are too high for the task can cause workers to use awkward shoulder, back, and neck postures. Working in these types of awkward postures can increase the risk of musculoskeletal injury, or MSI.

Reduce your risk of MSI by avoiding the following:

- Repeating the same movement over and over.
- Holding the same posture for long periods of time.
- Handling heavy weights.
- Working in a twisted posture.
- Falling into the trap of overconfidence.

Health Tip of the Day

SHRUG OFF SHOULDER TENSION

For shoulder injury prevention, always stretch well before and after activity. Also focus on strengthening your wrist, arm, shoulder, neck, and back muscles. The stronger and more flexible the joint is the more easily they are able to withstand impact or hold up under repetitive motions.

D&I Focus

We need to give each other the space to grow, to be ourselves, to exercise our diversity. We need to give each other space so that we may both give and receive such beautiful things as ideas, openness, dignity, joy, healing, and inclusion. - *Max De Pree*

Today is... [Renewal Day](#)

May 5, 2015

Safety Focus

LOW WORKING HEIGHTS

Working close to the ground or at a workstation that is too low for the task causes workers to bend forward at the back or lie on the ground. Working in these types of awkward postures can increase the risk of musculoskeletal injury, or MSI.

The risk of MSI is increased by:

- Exerting a lot of effort.
- Working in a twisted posture.

Health Tip of the Day

AN ACTIVE DAY AT THE OFFICE

How can you make a sedentary job more active? You can carry a pad and pencil so you can brainstorm ideas while taking a walk, or walk to your co-worker's desk instead of calling. Try "walking meetings." Consider a wireless headset so you can pace while you are on the phone. Use the stairs as much as possible instead of taking the elevator. If you take the bus, consider getting off a stop early and walking the rest of the way.

D&I Focus

It were not best that we should all think alike; it is difference of opinion that makes horse races. - *Mark Twain*

Today is... [Cinco de Mayo](#)

May 6, 2015

Safety Focus

LIGHTING AND VISIBILITY

Poor visibility resulting from shop layout and low lighting levels can lead to injury by:

- Causing workers to adopt awkward postures to see their work.
- Causing workers to make errors so they have to repeat their work
- unseen tripping hazards.

Physical environment is a human performance trap that can have real consequences for you and those around you – recognize the hazard from poor lighting or visibility and take steps to mitigate.

Health Tip of the Day

SYMPTOMS OF CATARACTS

According to the National Eye Institute, early symptoms of cataracts include blurred vision (which feels like you are looking through a piece of clouded glass), sensitivity to light, and subdued colors (colors may not appear as bright to you as they once did). Talk to your eye care professional if you have symptoms of cataracts. The risk of cataracts increases as you get older. If you are 60 or older, the National Eye Institute recommends a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once every two years.

D&I Focus

Non-cooperation is a measure of discipline and sacrifice, and it demands respect for the opposite views. - Mohandas K. Gandhi

Today is... [No Diet Day](#)

May 7, 2015

Safety Focus

FLOOR LEVEL STORAGE

Storing tools or materials at floor level causes workers to bend forward at the back. Working in this type of awkward posture can increase the risk of musculoskeletal injury. The risk of MSI is increased by:

- Repeating the same movement over and over.
- Handling heavy weights.
- Lifting and twisting.

The risk can be minimized by raising the height at which the load is stored.

Health Tip of the Day

IT'S A GOOD DAY TO DE-STRESS

Any day is a good day to take a few minutes to ease away stress. In as little as five minutes, you might be surprised how refreshed you can feel. Try different five-minute activities throughout the week such as stretching, daydreaming, deep breathing, reading a few pages of a novel, doodling, listening to your favorite song or going for a quick walk. These mini "me" times provide a quick break and give you a chance to regain emotional and mental control.

D&I Focus

Diversity and Inclusion are tools we use to ensure respect for all employees by valuing the diversity of thought.

Today is... [National Tourism Day](#)

May 8, 2015

Safety Focus

SAFE BENDING, LIFTING AND CARRYING

Good ergonomic design and the use of human performance tools in the workplace are important to preventing lower back injuries, as are the rules for safe lifting and carrying. Always follow these rules, even for lifting light objects:

- Place your feet apart for good balance.
- Bend your knees.
- Hold the object as close to your body as possible.
- Lift smoothly and slowly.
- Pivot with your feet – don't twist your back.
- Push, rather than pull a load.
- Share the load with a partner.
- Get mechanical assistance for heavy loads.

Know your own strengths and limitations – don't let time pressure or overconfidence cause you to put yourself or others at risk. Use proper lifting, bending and sitting techniques on the job to help reduce low-back injuries in the workplace.

Health Tip of the Day

FINDING AN EXERCISE BUDDY

Looking for someone who shares your workout enthusiasm? Check out the notice boards at your local gym or internal social media sites at work. Some employers also have recreational teams or clubs that bring together people who enjoy the same sport/activity. Another way to meet fellow exercisers is to participate in a fun run, charity walk or cycling event.

D&I Focus

Inclusion is a process of identifying, understanding and breaking down barriers to participation and belonging." - *Early Childhood Forum*

Today is... [Military Spouses Day](#) (the Friday before Mother's Day)

May 9, 2014

Safety Focus

CAUTION: ERGONOMIC WARNINGS AND SOLUTION

Repetitive or Prolonged Actions – Many back injuries do not come from a single lift, they typically result from minor strains that occur repeatedly over time. As you repeat irritating movements, minor injuries begin to accumulate and weaken affected muscles or ligaments. Eventually, the small injuries add up and a more serious injury can result.

Health Tip of the Day

MAINTAINING WEIGHT LOSS

The National Weight Control Registry has encouraging stories about people who have lost a significant amount of weight and maintained their weight loss. A few fun facts about these people: On average, 90 percent exercise about one hour per day; 78 percent eat breakfast every day; 75 percent weigh themselves at least once a week; and 62 percent watch less than 10 hours of TV per week. Success with weight loss is about making life-long lifestyle changes.

D&I Focus

“Diversity and Inclusion is a frame work of individual talents and cultures working together to produce one cohesive product.” *-Nathan Jones*

Today is... [International Migratory Bird Day](#) (the second Saturday in May)

May 10, 2015

Safety Focus

CAUTION: ERGONOMIC WARNINGS AND SOLUTION

Poor Physical Condition – Back injuries are not only the product of bending wrong or lifting extremely heavy objects. Your physical condition can lead to back pain. If you are overweight, especially if you have a pot-belly, extra strain is placed on your spine. Every pound up front puts 10 pounds of strain on your back.

Health Tip of the Day

IT'S ALL ABOUT PORTION CONTROL

Those 100-calorie packs, as much as we love them, are not always cost effective. Here is a way you can save money and practice portion control. Consider grabbing a giant bag of your favorite snack and a package of inexpensive re-sealable baggies or plastic containers. Break out the measuring cup and portion out your goodies before you have a chance to overdo it.

D&I Focus

"We have become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams."

- Jimmy Carter

Today is... [Mother's Day](#) (second Sunday in May)

May 11, 2015

Safety Focus

HOW CAN ERGONOMICS HELP?

Applying ergonomic principles in the workplace can reduce the risk factors for musculoskeletal disorders. Some common risk factors are:

- Awkward postures.
- Using excessive force to move objects.
- Repetitive or prolonged actions.
- Localized pressure.

Ergonomic programs include methods to:

- Identify risk factors.
- Implement controls to reduce or eliminate identified risk factors.
- Educate supervisors and workers on recognizing and eliminating risk factors.

Everyone can do something to improve his or her worksites ergonomically. Over the next few days we'll look at some examples of how to address ergonomic risk factors.

Health Tip of the Day

HEALTHY HABITS FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT

Americans are struggling to balance work and home life, which can make it difficult to practice healthy behaviors. The American Psychological Association recommends the following tips to help families deal with stress: Try taking a walk or going for a family bike ride – it's an inexpensive way to be active. Make a healthy dinner at home with your family, which not only saves you money but also helps bring you closer together. And, create a healthy bedtime routine in your home to help everyone get enough sleep.

D&I Focus

We won't always know whose lives we touched and made better for our having cared, because actions can sometimes have unforeseen ramifications. What's important is that you do care and you act. - *Charlotte Lunsford*

Today is... [Eat What You Want Day](#)

May 12, 2015

Safety Focus

OFFICE ERGONOMICS

In the midst of the information age, it's no surprise that one of the most prevalent work environments is a computer workstation. While this may seem like a relatively safe environment, computer and desk ergonomics suggest that there's more risk involved than you may realize. From ocular sensitivity or blurred vision to posture issues to carpal tunnel syndrome, there are many problems that can come from behind a desk.

Desk ergonomics encourage body alignment and proper distancing from the objects being utilized. Fortunately, most equipment can be adjusted to properly fit employees' size, preferences and physical conditions. Knowing how to adjust the equipment and position the body correctly will provide the most ergonomically safe environment for employees.

Health Tip of the Day

DONATE LIFE

Did you know that one organ donor can save up to eight lives? Currently, more than 124,000 people are waiting for an organ transplant in the United States. The need for organs and tissue is much greater than the number available for transplantation. Consider becoming an organ, tissue or marrow donor and give the extraordinary gift of life. To learn more, visit www.organdonor.gov.

D&I Focus

A Chinese proverb reads, as an ocean admits all rivers, one is to be inclusive to all things.

Today is... [International Nurses Day](#)

May 13, 2015

Safety Focus

SELECTING AN ERGONOMIC CHAIR

Consider your work tasks, and your body size and shape, when choosing a chair. A single size or type of chair is not appropriate for all tasks, and cannot suit all body shapes and sizes.

When you sit to perform a task, your spine is most comfortable when it's in "neutral posture." a slightly reclined sitting position.

Health Tip of the Day

TELEVISION AND EXERCISE

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, watching television is the leisure activity that occupies the most time for Americans, about 2.8 hours per day on average. Make your TV time work for you. Combine it with physical activity or stretching. Ideas include floor exercises (push-ups, sit-ups, etc.), stationary cycling or treadmill walking, working with hand weights, resistance bands or balls, or performing a series of upper- and lower-body stretches.

D&I Focus

"Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act."
- *Soloman*

Today is... [Frog Jumping Day](#)

May 14, 2015

Safety Focus

EYE STRAIN

Visual discomfort is a frequent complaint of computer workers. Eye strain, headaches, and blurred vision are the most common problems reported. Other problems include double vision, burning and dry eyes, eye fatigue, light sensitivity, and after-images. Neck shoulder and back pain can also be related to viewing the computer keyboard and/or screen.

Lighting and vision are inter-dependent. Workplace lighting and visual ability both play a significant role in work posture. Workers alter postures to relieve stress on the eyes. Complaints of neck, shoulder and back pain can frequently be alleviated if visual ergonomics are addressed.

Health Tip of the Day

FEELING SLUGGISH?

Although you might usually be able to do a good cardio workout, sometimes you may find that you are just too tired. Most of us have experienced this. If you are struggling through a workout, try working at a lower speed or intensity for a five-minute period in the middle of your regular workout. This little break may help your workout feel less tiring, and still help your heart and blood vessels stay healthy.

D&I Focus

“What a world this would be if we just build bridges instead of walls!”

- *Carlos Ramirez*

Today is... [Dance Like a Chicken Day](#)

May 15, 2015

Safety Focus

MONITOR ISSUES

The type and location of the monitor you use plays a significant role in visual comfort. The location of the visual target plays a major role in determining sitting posture. Visual requirements result in the user positioning the body so that the face is parallel to the viewing surface. This principle should be remembered when determining placement of a monitor. Before you start working, use S.T.A.R. (Stop, Think, Act, Review) to make sure that you and the monitor are aligned.

Visual acuity determines the optimal viewing distance to the monitor. Although standards require a minimum viewing distance of 12 inches, research studies have shown a preferred viewing distance of 30 to 40 inches from the screen.

Health Tip of the Day

AIM FOR BALANCE WHEN EATING OUT

Do you find it a challenge to eat healthfully when dining out? For many of us, it's a chance to indulge ourselves a bit. But, you can enjoy a meal in almost any restaurant and still keep healthful eating in mind. Start by going easy on the pre-meal snacks, like heavy appetizers, bread dipped in olive oil and tostada chips. Order salad dressings on the side and for your main course, look for menu items that are baked, broiled, grilled, roasted or steamed. Consider sharing an entrée with a friend or family member. This can also be good for your budget.

D&I Focus

Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.

- *Mother Teresa*

Today is... [National Bike to Work Day](#) (third Friday of month)

May 16, 2015

Safety Focus

CAUTION: ERGONOMIC WARNINGS AND SOLUTION

Using Excessive Force to Move Objects

- Carry fewer objects at a time.
- Select tools that can help the weight to be lifted.
- Use dollies and conveyers to move heavy materials.
- Provide training on proper lifting techniques.
- Do not bend or twist at the waist when lifting any object.
- Conduct a good Pre-Job Brief prior to any activity

Health Tip of the Day

FRISBEE FOR FITNESS

Frisbee is a great form of exercise. It is also a social activity that can be played by two people, or by 20. In fact, Frisbee can be a great way for you and your dog to stay active together. It can be done anywhere (beach, park, back yard, indoor gym), and is easy to learn. Young and old alike can enjoy this simple and inexpensive activity. The cost of a Frisbee is usually \$5 to \$15.

D&I Focus

I never will, by any word or act, bow to the shrine of intolerance or admit a right of inquiry into the religious opinions of others. - *Thomas Jefferson*

Today is... [Armed Forces Day](#) (Third Saturday of month)

May 17, 2015

Safety Focus

CAUTION: ERGONOMIC WARNINGS AND SOLUTION

Localized Pressure / Object Coupling

- Use elongated handles on tools such as pliers and scissors.
- Choose handles and work surfaces with rounded edges.

Awkward Postures

- Change your work methods to maintain a neutral posture.
- Change body position periodically throughout the day.
- Adjust workstation height to assist in maintaining a neutral posture.

Remember to use your Human Performance tools and practice safety. Don't learn by accident.

Health Tip of the Day

THE POWER OF MUSIC

Listening to music was the most common stress management technique in the 2014 American Psychological Association Stress in America Survey (exercise/walking was a close second). Music absorbs our attention and can be a distraction at the same time. Some types of music (especially slow, classical music) can help slow heart rate, blood pressure, and decrease levels of stress hormones. So the next time you feel tension and stress, turn on your favorite tunes and enjoy!

D&I Focus

Diversity can also help prevent issues such as group think. Group think is when members avoid supporting alternative views in an attempt to minimize conflict.

– *BoardSource*

Today is... [Pack Rat Day](#)

May 18, 2015

Safety Focus

BACK SAFETY

The back is a wonderfully designed system for flexibility, weight bearing, and mobility. Unfortunately, because it usually works so well, we tend to neglect its needs. Proper posture and correct body mechanics are important to preserve the health of our back. More than 7 out of every 10 adults have experienced significant back pain in their lives.

Health Tip of the Day

REPLACING NICOTINE

Did you know that the stimulant nicotine is the only addictive chemical in cigarettes? Research suggests that nicotine is as addictive as heroin and cocaine. However, there are more than 7,000 other chemicals, including many that can cause cancer, in cigarette smoke. Using nicotine gum or patches to help yourself or a loved one quit smoking will not cause cancer and may help you be more successful in overcoming the addiction. For more information about quitting smoking, visit: www.smokefree.gov.

D&I Focus

All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence. - *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Today is... [Visit Your Relatives Day](#)

May 19, 2015

Safety Focus

BASICS OF GOOD LIFTING

Today, forklifts, hoists and other types of lifting equipment are used to lift heavy objects. However, sometimes it is necessary to load or unload moderate to heavy objects by hand. When that is the case, knowing the proper ways to lift can save you a great deal of pain and misery from a sprained back.

Health Tip of the Day

VITAMIN E SUPPLEMENTS AND HEART DISEASE

Many believe that antioxidant supplements, such as vitamin E, will help prevent various medical problems including heart disease. However, there is no conclusive evidence that taking antioxidant supplements can reduce your risk of heart disease and in fact, taking 400 IU vitamin E supplements (or higher) may actually be harmful. Health experts recommend getting vitamin E through foods such as nuts, seeds, green leafy vegetables and vegetable oils.

D&I Focus

“Inclusive leadership is about recognizing and valuing diversity or difference, and valuing people, recognizing them for their skills, experience and talent, and treating them equally and fairly – irrespective of their ethnic background, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, belief, or of any disability they may have.”

- Morvia Gooden

Today is... [Boy's Club Day](#)

May 20, 2015

Safety Focus

ASSESS THE SITUATION BEFORE YOU LIFT

Before lifting or carrying a heavy object, ask yourself the following questions:

- What human performance tools can you use?
- Can you lift this load safely or is it a two-person lift?
- How far will you have to carry the load?
- Is the path clear of clutter, cords, slippery areas, overhangs, stairs, curbs or uneven surfaces?
- Will you encounter closed doors that need to be opened?
- Once the load is lifted, will it block your view?
- Can the load be broken down into smaller parts?
- Should you wear gloves to get a better grip and protect your hands?

Health Tip of the Day

WHOLE GRAINS: MORE THAN FIBER

The benefits from eating whole-grain foods go way beyond dietary fiber alone. Whole-grain foods, like whole-wheat bread, oatmeal and brown rice, are also rich in B vitamins, vitamin E, and iron. Most importantly, a diet rich in whole-grain foods has been linked to reducing the risk of diabetes and coronary heart disease, and helping with weight maintenance. According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, we should aim to eat at least half of our grains as whole grains.

D&I Focus

“Energy cannot thrive without the creativity and capability of each employee.”

Today is... [Pick Strawberries Day](#)

May 21, 2015

Safety Focus

WORKSTATION MYTHS

Many generally accepted guidelines for posture and furniture at computer workstations are, in reality, myths. If rigidly followed, these misconceptions can lead to uncomfortable and costly mistakes such as;

- Adjustable work stations are the best office furniture.
- Ergonomic chairs are designed to fit all users.
- Height adjustable chairs enable you to work at any height table.
- Computer operators should sit upright at the computer.

Correct posture at the computer eliminates discomfort and possible injury.

Health Tip of the Day

PREVENT CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Today, nearly one in three children in America is either overweight or obese. The children are our future, so let's keep them healthy. Help your family stay on the path to maintaining a healthy weight by following these tips: aim to fill your grocery cart with at least 80 percent healthy choices; watch portion sizes; plan and prepare healthy meals together; eat as a family most days of the week; limit computer and TV time and be more active.

D&I Focus

"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others." - *Jack Welch*

Today is... [National Waiters and Waitresses Day](#)

May 22, 2015

Safety Focus

SETTING THE LOAD DOWN

- Bend your knees. Squat down and let your legs do the work.
- Keep your back curved. Remember not to twist your body while setting down a load, and keep your head up.
- Keep the load close.
- Plan your release. Once the load is where you want it, release your grip. Never release your grip until the load is secure.

Health Tip of the Day

SNUFF VERSUS CIGARETTES

MYTH: Using snuff (a type of smokeless tobacco) is less likely to cause many kinds of cancers than smoking cigarettes. FACT: No form of tobacco is healthy or safe. According to the National Cancer Institute, snuff contains at least 28 cancer-causing substances. Although snuff use is not directly linked to lung cancer, it is highly associated with cancers of the mouth, throat and pancreas.

D&I Focus

"It is not the strongest of the species nor the most intelligent, but the most responsive to change that survives." - *Charles Darwin*

Today is... [Buy a Musical Instrument Day](#)

May 23, 2015

Safety Focus

USING HAND TRUCKS AND PUSHCARTS

- Push rather than pull. It is easier and safer to push than to pull.
- You can use your body weight to assist when pushing.
- Keep close and lock your arms. Stay close to the load, try not to lean over and keep your back in its natural arches.
- Use both hands. Carts are easier to push and control using both hands.
- Use tie-downs, if necessary, to secure the load.

Health Tip of the Day

WHAT IS THE DASH DIET?

The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet was developed to help people lower their blood pressure, but it is really a healthy plan for most people. The DASH eating plan is a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and low-fat or nonfat dairy foods. It also includes grains, especially whole grains; lean meats, fish and poultry; and nuts and beans. In addition to lowering blood pressure, the DASH eating plan may also help you achieve or maintain a healthy weight.

D&I Focus

Everyone's input is important. Take the time to actively listen.

Today is... [International Jazz Day](#) (Saturday of Memorial Day weekend)

May 24, 2015

Safety Focus

USE GOOD LIFTING TECHNIQUES

- Get close to the load. Center yourself over the load and stand with your feet shoulder width apart.
- Tighten your stomach muscles. Tight abdominal muscles increase intra-abdominal pressure and help to support the back.
- Get a good handhold and pull the load close to you. The farther the load is from your body, the heavier it will feel.
- Bend your knees. Bending your knees is the single most important thing you can do when you lift moderate to heavy objects.
- Squat down like a weightlifter, bend your knees, keep your back in its natural arch, and let your legs do the lifting. Your leg muscles are much more powerful than the smaller muscles in your back.
- Do not jerk. Use a smooth motion and lift straight up.

Health Tip of the Day

LOW-FAT BROWNIES

Do you have a bake sale coming up? Consider modifying your traditional brownie mix recipe a bit. To make it a healthier dessert, omit the oil, double the water, use two egg whites in place of each egg, and add 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract. Your brownies will remain moist and chewy and you'll save about 15 grams of fat per tablespoon of oil omitted. Enjoy, but don't forget, reduced fat doesn't mean calorie-free; portion size still matters.

D&I Focus

"Inclusive design really is just better design." - *Dave Barrett*

Today is... [National Escargot Day](#)

May 25, 2015

Safety Focus

MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS - ANATOMY OF AN INJURY

Thoracic outlet syndrome occurs when the brachial plexus (a network of nerves that sends signals from your spine to your shoulder, arm and hand) is compressed by tightness of the scalene (a group of anterior neck muscles that attach to the first rib), or by the first rib being elevated. Signs and symptoms include numbness and tingling in the hand, often made worse with overhead activities such as drying your hair with a dryer, or cradling the phone between the ear and shoulder. Compression of the brachial plexus often stems from muscle tightness at the side of the neck that can result from poor head position or slumped posture. Sleeping with your hands up over your head or around your pillow can make pain worse at night.

Health Tip of the Day

BREAST CANCER AND WEIGHT CONTROL

Research has found that women who steadily gain weight through adulthood increase their risk for breast cancer after menopause. Minimize your risk. Choose healthful foods, participate in regular exercise and maintain a healthy weight into your golden years.

D&I Focus

Memorial Day Holiday – a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service.

Today is... [Memorial Day](#) (last Monday of month)

May 26, 2015

Safety Focus

MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS - ANATOMY OF AN INJURY

Radial tunnel syndrome refers to compression of the radial nerve (nerve that travels from the wrist to the shoulder) at the outside of the elbow. It is frequently caused by repetitive wrist and finger extension or turning of the forearm. Symptoms can occur at the elbow where the nerve is compressed or near the base of thumb, or anywhere in between. Wrist weakness is a common symptom. Proper use of all human performance tools are key to preventing this type of injury.

Health Tip of the Day

D&I Focus

In our personal ambitions we are individualists. But in our seeking for economic and political progress as a nation, we all go up or else all go down as one people.
- *Franklin D. Roosevelt*

Today is... [Sally Ride Day](#)

May 27, 2015

Safety Focus

MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS - ANATOMY OF AN INJURY

Cubital tunnel syndrome occurs when the ulnar nerve (the nerve that travels from the wrist to the shoulder) is compressed at the inside of the elbow. Common symptoms include numbness or tingling up and down the inside of your arm, with tingling into the ring and little fingers. Repetitive bending of the elbow, or resting your elbow on a hard surface are common causes of this nerve injury. The ulnar nerve can also be compressed at the Guyon's canal in the wrist (a semi-rigid longitudinal canal in the wrist that allows passage of the ulnar artery and ulnar nerve into the hand), but this is less common.

Health Tip of the Day

PRE-EXERCISE EATING

Eating an easy-to-digest, high-carbohydrate meal or snack one to three hours before exercise is recommended. Use these guidelines to design your meal or snack: have enough fluid to keep you hydrated, choose foods low in fat and fiber, high in carbohydrates, and moderate in protein. Also, select foods familiar to you. Eating prior to exercise does not work for everyone; be sure to do what works best for you.

D&I Focus

Inclusion is what makes us diverse

Today is... [Sun Screen Day](#)

May 28, 2015

Safety Focus

MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS - ANATOMY OF AN INJURY

Carpal tunnel syndrome is caused by compression of the median nerve at the level of the carpal tunnel. This tunnel is formed at the wrist by the transverse ligament over the carpal bones in the hand. Early signs or symptoms may include numbness or tingling in the thumb, index or middle finger and one half of the ring finger. Persons are often awakened at night by the hand "falling asleep". Symptoms are often increased when driving or attempting to hold objects. Frequent dropping of objects is a common complaint. Proper use of all human performance tools are key to preventing this type of injury.

Health Tip of the Day

IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

You might be surprised to know that irritable bowel syndrome affects about 1 out of 10 people in the United States. The exact cause is not known. Abdominal pain or discomfort is the key symptom of IBS. For persons with IBS, it is important to be aware of what factors "trigger" symptoms. For many, symptoms can be triggered by stress. IBS can often be managed with changes to a healthier lifestyle, or dietary changes such as modifying the consumption of "trigger" foods. Talk to your doctor if you have IBS symptoms.

D&I Focus

One day our descendants will think it incredible that we paid so much attention to things like the amount of melanin in our skin or the shape of our eyes or our gender instead of the unique identities of each of us as complex human beings.

- Franklin Thomas

Today is... [Amnesty International Day](#)

May 29, 2015

Safety Focus

MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS - ANATOMY OF AN INJURY

Tendons also can be affected by repetitive motions. They attach muscle to bone, and are connective tissues that contain little stretch or rebound. If they are stressed beyond their strength by overuse, or maintaining a static or prolonged position, they can get tiny tears in them. Friction from overuse can also cause inflammation. This causes a condition known as tendinitis.

Health Tip of the Day

FRUIT CUBES

Here's a great way to freshen up your drink and add important nutrients: Fill ice cube trays with a clear 100 percent juice, such as white grape juice or apple juice. Add fresh berries such as blueberries, sliced strawberries or raspberries. Freeze. Use fruit cubes in sparkling water, seltzer or iced tea.

D&I Focus

We do not grow absolutely, chronologically. We grow sometimes in one dimension, and not in another; unevenly. We grow partially. We are relative. We are mature in one realm, childish in another. The past, present, and future mingle and pull us backward, forward, or fix us in the present. We are made up of layers, cells, constellations. - *Anais Nin*

Today is... [Learn About Composting Day](#)

May 30, 2015

Safety Focus

REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURY (RSI): WHAT IS GOOD TREATMENT?

Repetitive strain injury is a common condition that encompasses many different injuries. The spectrum ranges from carpal tunnel syndrome to tendonitis. The common denominator is that they are caused by excessive repetitive activity or overuse. There is no specific protocol for treating RSI, due to the fact that RSI can be so many things. However, getting the correct treatment is essential for recovery of the affected area. And the earlier you seek treatment, the faster the recovery.

Health Tip of the Day

DOGS AND HEART HEALTH: THE CANINE CONNECTION

Many people adopt a dog or other pet for companionship. But did you know that owning a dog may benefit your health? According to the American Heart Association, owning a pet, especially a dog, is associated with a lower risk of heart disease. One possible reason for this is that people who need to get out and walk their dogs may also find themselves getting more physical activity as a result. If you have a dog, you may have a ready and willing exercise companion and you can both benefit from being active together!

D&I Focus

The wave of the future is not the conquest of the world by a single dogmatic creed but the liberation of the diverse energies of free nations and free men.

- *John F. Kennedy*

Today is... [Water a Flower Day](#)

May 31, 2015

Safety Focus

SIZE UP THE LOAD BEFORE LIFTING. REMEMBER STAR (STOP, THINK, ACT, REVIEW)

- Test the weight by lifting one of the corners. If it is too heavy or an awkward shape, stop.
- If there is any doubt, ask for help from fellow workers.
- Try to use a mechanical lift or a hand truck.
- Try to break the load down into smaller parts.

Health Tip of the Day

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU DRINK TOO MUCH?

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, answering yes to any of the following questions might indicate a problem with alcohol:

- Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- Does your drinking ever make you late for work or worry your family?
- Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't or do you forget what you did while you were drinking?
- Do you get headaches or have a hang-over after you have been drinking?

If you answered yes to one or more of the questions, talk to your doctor.

D&I Focus

Men are not prisoners of fate, but only prisoners of their own minds.

- *Franklin D. Roosevelt*

Today is... [National Macaroon Day](#)