



# Southwest Center

FOR AGRICULTURAL HEALTH, INJURY PREVENTION, AND EDUCATION

## ERGONOMICS IN THE WORKPLACE

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## MONTHLY SAFETY BLAST

*Produced by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education*

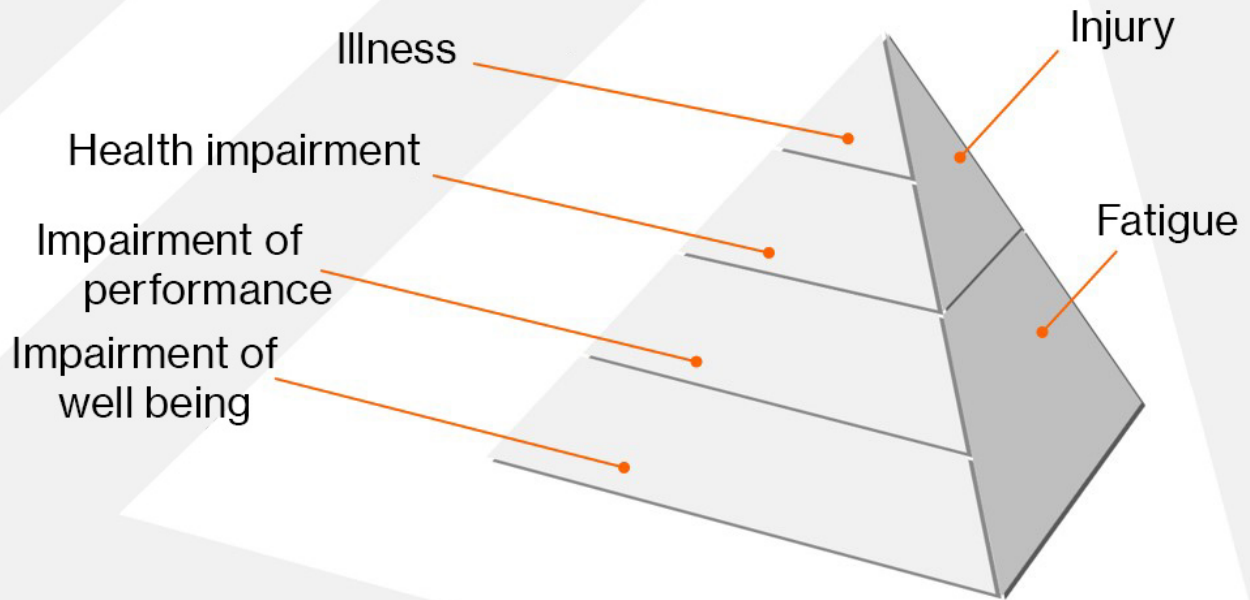
MARCH 2019

## ERGONOMICS IN THE WORKPLACE

Ergonomics can roughly be defined as the study of people in their working environment. Workers in many different industries and occupations can be exposed to risk factors at work, such as lifting heavy items, bending, reaching overhead, pushing and pulling heavy loads, working in awkward body postures and performing the same or similar tasks repetitively. Exposure to these known risk factors for musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) increases a worker's risk of injury.

**Ergonomics tips:**

# Pyramid of ergonomics



- Be alert and avoid situations that can cause repeated strains to the arms, hands, back, and neck.
- Try to maintain a neutral hand or arm position while doing any task.
- Report to your supervisor any situations that may cause a repeated strain or stress to your body.
- Avoid situations that may create strains or muscle pulls due to force or position required to complete the task.
- In order to reduce the possibility of strains, prepare your body by stretching or participating in simple warm-up activities early in your shift.

## Lifting Guidelines

- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Keep the load close to your body.
- Move your feet to turn and never twist your body while lifting.
- Think about your foot position when lifting an object to ensure your feet are safe if the load falls.
- Get help with heavy or bulky loads.
- Be alert for pinch points and watch your hand position.
- Maintain communication with anyone helping you lift.
- Be alert when carrying long objects that may strike a person or equipment.

The goal of these tips and guidelines are designed help to provide a safe environment that minimizes potential injuries, decreases cumulative trauma disorders and workers' compensation expenses, increases productivity, and ensures a healthier work environment.

## EIGHT COMMANDMENTS OF LIFTING



1. Plan your lift and test load



2. Ask for help



3. Get a firm footing



4. Bend your knees



5. Tighten your stomach muscles



6. Lift with your legs



7. Keep the load close



8. Keep your back upright

### References:

- <https://www.osha.gov>
- <https://ehs.unc.edu/workplace-safety/>
- <http://www.uwosh.edu/ehs/campus-health-and-safety>



Take the **Ergonomics in the Workplace** quiz to test your knowledge!

**Disclaimer:** The facts and information listed above are merely suggestions for your safety, but are in no way a comprehensive and exhaustive list of all actions needed to insure your safety.

*Monthly Blast by our Outreach Health Education Coordinator, Nykole Kafka Vance, MS, CEP, CHES*

Sharing is caring!



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