



# SOFT TISSUE INJURIES

Ouch! That hurts. A common response made by many when soft tissue injuries occur. Soft tissue injuries come in the form of back injuries, sprains or strains. Thousands of people injure their soft tissue every year that results in time away from work. *The top three reasons soft tissue injuries occur are: lifting, repetitive motion and pulling/pushing.*

### Factors contributed to soft tissue Injuries:

#### Worker Factors

- Age
- Body composition
- Physical fitness
- Health
- Training

#### Job Factors

- Repetitive motion
- Carrying
- Duration of task
- Vibrating tools
- Twisting
- Awkward/static positions

#### Environmental Factors

- Work climate
- Time of day
- Temperature
- Workstations

A worksite analysis can identify jobs and workstations which may contain musculoskeletal/sprain/strain hazards such as:

- Heavy items stored in high places
- Workstations not ergonomically correct
- Jobs that require twisting, pushing, and pulling
- Jobs that require static or awkward postures

### Things You Can Do

- Eat healthy
- Get a good night's sleep
- Regular physician checkups
- Warm-up before working
- Good posture
- Exercise regularly

**Analyze** - Think about the risks you are exposed to on a particular job.

**Minimize** - Minimize identified risks by finding ways to reduce repetitive motion, excessive force or static positioning.

**Neutralize** - Neutralize awkward positions that cause strain and tension, keep shoulders and back relaxed, neck straight, arms and elbows close to your body.

**SDAIO Special Districts Association of Oregon** Stretch & Flex Program

The SDAIO Stretch & Flex Program is a voluntary program which should be completed at the beginning of each day prior to performing any physical work. It is not a good idea to stretch cold muscles, so warm up your muscles by moving around before stretching. Consult your physician before beginning any stretching or exercise program, or if you have questions about your ability to perform any of the stretches listed below.

Before you begin, relax with your feet approximately shoulder width apart and slightly bend your knees with your arms hanging by your side. Keep your back straight by contracting your abdominal muscles. Do the stretches at your own speed and hold each stretch for the appropriate amount. Do not hold - it is more a compression. Do not bounce or rock muscles across the stretches, and remember to breathe calmly and deeply. Repeat stretches three or four times.

If anything causes pain try modifying your position or stop altogether. Contact your physician if pain persists.

<p><b>Back Stretch</b></p> <p>Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Bend your knees slightly and lean forward to touch your toes. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times.</p>	<p><b>Shoulder Flex</b></p> <p>Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Lift your arms straight up over your head. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times.</p>	<p><b>Crossover Shoulder Stretch</b></p> <p>Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Pull your right arm across your chest. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times on the opposite side.</p>
<p><b>Behind the Back Shoulder Stretch</b></p> <p>Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Clasp your hands behind your back. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times.</p>	<p><b>Back Extension Stretch</b></p> <p>Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Tilt your head back and arch your lower back. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times.</p>	<p><b>Lumbar Stretch</b></p> <p>Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Bend down, round your back and touch your toes. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times.</p>
<p><b>Reach for the Sky Stretch</b></p> <p>Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Reach your arms straight up over your head. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times.</p>	<p><b>Side Lateral Stretch</b></p> <p>Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Bend your right arm over your head and pull it over your left shoulder. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times on the opposite side.</p>	<p><b>Forearm Stretch</b></p> <p>Place your arms together with fingers at the base. Bend your wrists and pull your fingers away from your body. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times.</p>
<p><b>Hamstring Stretch</b></p> <p>Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Slightly bend your knees and lean forward to touch your toes. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times.</p>	<p><b>Quadriceps Stretch</b></p> <p>Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Bend your right knee and pull your heel towards your buttocks. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times on the opposite side.</p>	<p><b>Calf Stretch</b></p> <p>Stand upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Step forward with your right foot and pull your heel towards your buttocks. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times on the opposite side.</p>

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