

## Most strain injuries made on the shopfloor

Factory workers rather than managers are most at risk from repetitive strain injury (RSI), the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) has warned. It says the problem is widespread, with 86,000 new work-related cases recorded last year. An analysis of official Health and Safety Executive figures shows 'metal, plastics, textile and other plant and machine workers' top the RSI rates league table, followed by 'bricklayers, plumbers, carpenters and others in skilled trades'. The jobs with lowest rates were professionals and managers, with an incidence just one-third that of the high risk trades. CSP chair Sarah Bazin said all employers should use occupational health physiotherapists. "Physios can advise on appropriate equipment and safe working practices for staff. Taking regular, short breaks throughout the day and reporting symptoms early on can help." She added: "Employers who invest in the health of their workforce can expect to see a reduction in sickness absence and a more productive workforce." CSP has published a list of "top tips" for workers on how to avoid RSI. It says it wants to see employers: Provide assessments for each staff member to see what risks are associated with their job and how best to combat them; encourage early reporting of any symptoms and provide access to appropriate help, such as consulting an occupational physiotherapist; and to ensure employees are able to organise their work and take regular breaks. Canadian union federation CLC called this week for workplace ergonomic regulations to prevent strain injuries. Similar measures to tackle workplace strains were part of the European Union's plan of work for 2002-2006, but were blocked by employers' organisations ([Risks 295](#)).

- [CSP news release](#) and RSI 'top tips on RSI prevention' factsheet [[pdf](#)]. [CLC news release](#). [RSI Action](#).