

# Musculoskeletal disorders

## Signposting HSE material for health and safety representatives

Work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are the most commonly reported cause of occupational ill-health in Great Britain with over half a million workers suffering from a work-related MSD at any one time.

MSDs are prevalent in all sectors but agriculture, logistics and transport, construction and health and social care have significantly higher than average rates.

The 2016 TUC survey of safety representatives showed that it was also one of the problems most encountered by health and safety representatives with 32 per cent of those responding saying that that back strains were a major concern for members and 26 per cent saying that repetitive strain injuries were a major concern.

MSDs are preventable and the HSE has published a range of useful publications of tools that will help health and safety representatives work with their employer to reduce the levels of MSDs in their workplace.

For basic information on preventing MSDs go to <http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/msds.htm>

### Toolkits

There are three MSD toolkits that can be used by both health and safety representatives and managers to help highlight high-risk tasks. These are:

- › Manual handling assessment charts ([the Mac tool](#))
- › Assessment of repetitive tasks of the upper limbs ([the ART tool](#))
- › Risk assessment of pushing and pulling ([the RAPP tool](#))

## Regulations

The main regulations and related guidance are also on the HSE site. These are the Manual Handling Operations 1992 and the guidance on the regulations ([download here](#)) and the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) regulations and guidance ([download here](#)).

## Guides

There are a range of guides published by the HSE. Many of them are written for employers to tell them how to comply with the law, but they are equally of use to health and safety representatives.

These include:

- › [Manual handling at work](#)
- › [Upper limb disorders in the workplace](#)
- › [Working with display screen equipment](#)
- › There is also a display screen equipment workstation checklist [available](#).

The HSE material will ensure that you know what your employer must do to obey the law. Some sectors have their own guidance that is published jointly between the employers and unions.

The HSE also has a "[Go Home Healthy](#)" campaign website which includes material on MSDs. To keep up to date with developments in health and safety you can subscribe to [HSE eBulletins](#), or to the TUC [Risks newsletter](#).