



Job Aid: Common Types of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)

Possible Causes in the Workplace	Symptoms People Experience	Disorder
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetitive and forceful manual tasks without time to recover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbness, tingling, and severe pain affecting the fingers and wrists 	<i>Carpal tunnel syndrome</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overuse of the muscle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injury to a muscle resulting in swelling and pain* 	<i>Strains</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetitive and forceful tasks without adequate time to recover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injury to ligaments around a joint, causing pain, swelling, and skin discoloration—severity depends on site of injury and extent of damage* 	<i>Sprains</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetitive and forceful hand and wrist motions, awkward wrist position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain and swelling in the hands and wrists 	<i>Tenosynovitis</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure to vibration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbness, tingling, ashen skin, loss of feeling and control 	<i>Raynaud's syndrome</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetitive and forceful hand and wrist motions, awkward wrist position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain and swelling in the hands and wrists—at the site of the affected tendon 	<i>Tendinitis</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performing overhead tasks, holding heavy objects low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain in the shoulder and upper arm 	<i>Thoracic outlet syndrome</i>

*Definition found in the *Barron's Medical Guide, Dictionary of Medical Terms*, Fifth Edition. Rothenburg, Mikel A., Charles F. Chapman. Dictionary of medical terms for the non-medical person, 5th Ed., 2006.

Job Aid: Common Types of Musculoskeletal Disorders (continued)

Possible Causes in the Workplace	Symptoms People Experience	Disorder
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performing overhead tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain in the shoulder and upper arm 	<i>Bursitis</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performing tasks that require elbow to be elevated and held away from the body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain and stiffness in the shoulders 	<i>Rotator cuff syndrome</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetitive wrist motion, especially twisting, sustained pressure on the wrist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bumps on the wrists that are spongy and painful, impaired movement of the wrist 	<i>Ganglion cysts</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twisting and gripping, repetitive pushing of controls, repetitive movement of the thumb, outward deviation of the wrist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain at the base of the thumbs 	<i>DeQuervain's disease</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeatedly using the index fingers, forceful gripping of tools that have hard or sharp edges on their handles, pulling a trigger control on power hand tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty moving finger; snapping and jerking movements 	<i>Trigger-finger syndrome</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Striking objects repeatedly with the heel of the hand, exposure to long periods of extreme vibration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbness of the fingers, insensitivity to the cold, and a painful lump on the fleshy surface of the palm below the thumb 	<i>Hypothenar hammer syndrome</i>

Job Aid: Common Types of Musculoskeletal Disorders (continued)

Possible Causes in the Workplace	Symptoms People Experience	Disorder
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of electric or pneumatic tools, extreme vibration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbness, pain, and blanching of the fingers, loss of finger control, increased sensitivity to heat and cold 	<i>Hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotating forearm, violent or highly repetitive action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflammation of tissues on the thumb side of the elbow 	<i>Epicondylitis</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole body vibration, incorrect lifting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low back pain, shooting back pain or numbness in the upper legs 	<i>Back disability</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding neck in one position for extended period of time, holding neck in an awkward position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neck aches and headaches 	<i>Tension neck syndrome</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overhead assembly, reaching behind, reaching into far corners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain, tenderness, and swelling in the shoulders 	<i>Ligament sprain</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repetitive motion of or sustained pressure on the elbow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain and restricted motion of the elbow 	<i>Cubital tunnel syndrome</i>