

Ergonomic Risk Factors

Ergonomic risk factors are workplace elements that are associated with discomfort you may experience, and if ignored, over time may contribute to wear and tear on your body.

RISK FACTORS	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
Poor Work Organization	Aspects of how a job is organized. Examples include monotonous tasks, machine paced work, inadequate breaks, multiple deadlines.	Reasonable workload, sufficient breaks, task variety, individual autonomy.
Continual Repetition	Performing the same motion over and over.	Redesign the task to reduce the number of repetitions or motions; increase recovery time, rotate to different tasks.
Excessive Force	Forceful body movement. Excessive physical effort —pulling, pounding, and pushing.	Reduce the exertion needed to accomplish the task; redesign task; assign more staff; use mechanical assists.
Awkward Posture	Prolonged bending, reaching, twisting, squatting, kneeling. Awkward posture is the opposite of a neutral position.	Design tasks and equipment to keep the body in “neutral” positions. Neutral positions put no undue stress on muscles, joints and nerves.
Stationary Positions	Staying in one position too long, causing muscles to contract and fatigue.	Design tasks to avoid stationary positions; provide opportunities to change positions.
Excessive Direct Pressure	Contact of the body with a hard surface or edge, such as the corner of a table or tool.	Avoid resting body on hard surfaces, such as desks and counters. Upgrade equipment or provide cushioning; e.g. ergonomic pens, mats for standing.
Inadequate Lighting	Sources and levels of light that provide too much or too little illumination.	Adjust natural and artificial lighting. Avoid direct and indirect light that can cause eye-strain. Use glare screens, shades for windows.

- v Not all employees exposed to these risk factors will be affected.
- v Many jobs involve more than one of these risk factors.
- v The more risk factors and the longer you are exposed, the greater the chances of developing symptoms and injury.
- v The amounts of exposure (# of motions, levels of force) that can cause a disorder are not yet known.