

SET UP AN EARLY REPORTING SYSTEM

THREE STEPS TO REPORTING SPRAINS AND STRAINS EARLY

WORK
SHOULD NOT
HURT.



THREE STEPS TO REPORTING SPRAINS AND STRAINS EARLY

Sure, slips, trips or bumps in the workplace are a pain, but most discomfort and pain at work isn't from an injury that happens suddenly. That aching in your back or cramp in your shoulder builds up gradually over time.

Luckily, most of the time those sprains and strains don't need medical treatment, and a good way to tackle them is through early reporting.

This early reporting system lets you nip those aches and pains in the bud before they get worse. As a manager, you can look at what led to the pain in the first place and prevent it from happening in the future. Check out chasnz.org/wsnh.



1

STEP ONE



CHOOSE YOUR TOOL



Figure out which early reporting tools suits you best. It could be as simple as printed out copies of the form in your staff room, trucks or with the supervisors.

If it makes sense, create an early reporting policy that covers who will manage reports, follow up issues and monitor your workers.

2

STEP TWO



TELL THE TEAM



Have a catchup with workers and fill them in on why they need to report sprains and strains and how to do so. We have a helpful Tool Box Talk to get you started.

Don't leave it there! Keep reminding your team why it's important to report early. This could be as simple as bringing it up at a later Tool Box Talk or asking staff how they're going with it.

Remember, making a note of discomfort early on can help stop it becoming a full-blown, need-to-take-time-off injury.

3

STEP THREE



MANAGE AND SUPPORT



You don't need to be a health expert to help. Manage your worker's discomfort by showing support, looking at their work conditions to see what could be contributing to their pain, encouraging them to do some stretches, and catching up with them again later to check in on their progress. Take a look at our Early Reporting Checklist for more ideas.

If the problem isn't getting better after four weeks, you could get a health professional like a physiotherapist involved.

REPORT FORM



WHERE DO YOU HURT?

REPORT PAIN EARLY TO AVOID LONG TERM PROBLEMS

Name: _____

Date: _____

Mark on the figure below where you feel achy or sore, and rate how sore you're feeling.

FRONT BODY	BACK BODY	LEFT HAND
		RIGHT HAND

SEVERITY

1	2	3	4
Severe pain	Pain	Mild pain	Discomfort

DURATION

A	B	C	D
Discomfort/pain is always present to some degree	Discomfort/pain stays after work, but improves after a night's rest	Only at work	Occasional

Continued on other side →

When did you first notice the ache or pain? Days ago Week ago Weeks ago

The ache or pain is... Getting worse Staying the same Getting better

Have you had this before? Yes No

Do you think any of the following are causing, or adding to, your ache or pain?

(mark all the apply)

- Your general health Your fitness Stress
 - The pace of work Too few staff Lack of equipment Poor work relationships
 Lack of control over your work
 - Awkward postures while working Heavy lifting Working overhead
 Over-reaching Vibrations Working bent over
 - The weather Activities outside of work
 - Other (tell us): _____
-

What are you doing to manage your ache or pain?

- Pain relief drugs Rest Exercises Stretches Warming up before work
 Keeping active in general/Relaxing
 - Changing the way I do things at work Pacing myself at work
 - Getting professional treatment
 - Other (tell us): _____
-

Thanks for that!

Don't worry, most aches and pain at work aren't because of an injury and they usually get better quickly on their own.

But, make sure to get in touch with a health professional if you have any of the following:

- The pain gets worse when you lie down.
- If you feel any numbness in your groin.
- If the pain doesn't go away at night.
- If you have a history of cancer.
- If you get a fever, bladder or bowel problems or start losing weight for an unexplained reason.

(For employers)

- Spoke to worker Addressed contributing factors Agreed to catch up later
- Talked about contributing factors Provided self-help info No further action required

YOU'VE GOT A REPORT SYSTEM, NOW WHAT?

You don't have to be a health expert to help someone who's dealing with pain and discomfort at work. Luckily, most sprains and strains get better without medical treatment. Here are some ideas of what you as a manager can do to help.

EARLY REPORTING CHECKLIST

- ✔ Promote an open and honest work culture where health and wellbeing are taken seriously. Talk about this stuff often and share your own experiences.
- ✔ Review early report forms when they come in. Have a think about what could have led to their discomfort or aches.
- ✔ Have a chat with the worker and go over their report.
- ✔ Identify which tasks and conditions at work that could have contributed to their discomfort or pain and then put controls in place to deal with them.
- ✔ Look at what the worker is doing to manage their discomfort or pain.
- ✔ Support and encourage your team member to stay active and keep working.
- ✔ Check in on their progress and catch up regularly until the ache or pain is gone.
- ✔ If the issue is getting worse, or isn't getting better after four weeks, get a health professional involved.

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