

Student Handout

Musculoskeletal Injuries (MSIs)

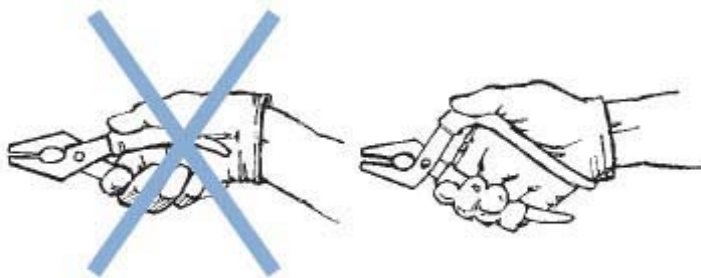
A musculoskeletal injury is an injury or disorder of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves, or blood vessels due to overexertion, repetitive motion, or uncomfortable postures. Some common MSIs include muscle or tendon strains, ligament sprains, and tendonitis.

Examples of risk factors

Risk factors are aspects of the job that put you at risk of injury. The risk of injury depends on how long and how many times you are exposed to a risk factor. An auto mechanic's work is particularly awkward and demanding, and frequently results in injuries to the wrists, elbows, and back. The worker's body is forced to conform to the various engine configurations and auto designs.

Auto mechanics are exposed to the following MSI risk factors:

- ❑ Maintaining uncomfortable postures for long periods of time
- ❑ Lifting, pushing, or pulling objects that are heavy or difficult to handle
- ❑ Reaching and working overhead
- ❑ Performing the same movements repeatedly



Tools with angled handles keep the wrist straight.



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Safety tips

Here are some things that employers and workers can do to reduce the risk of injury:

- ❑ Take frequent mini-breaks to relieve awkward neck and head postures
- ❑ Use padded coverings on the car to support the upper body and reduce contact stress
- ❑ Use specialized creepers that support the head and neck
- ❑ Use sturdy carts instead of carrying heavy engine parts and tools
- ❑ Organize tools, carts, and trays to put the most frequently used tools within easy reach
- ❑ Use power tools whenever possible to reduce force on the upper extremities
- ❑ Wear appropriate clothing and gloves to help prevent abrasions, cuts, and contact stress

