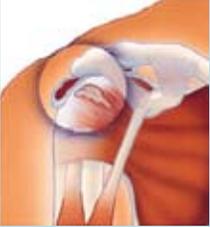


# Solutions for preventing shoulder and neck injuries



Ergonomics means new ways of doing the work, which will reduce your risk of getting hurt by limiting and avoiding overexertion, awkward postures, and repetitive motions.



What can you do to avoid extended periods of shoulder and neck stress? Can you rotate your work tasks, so your muscles can rest?



How can you change your work posture so your elbows are kept close to your body and at waist height? Can you add a neck support so your muscles aren't holding the full weight of your head?



Maintain your tools so they work well and you don't need as much force to get the job done.

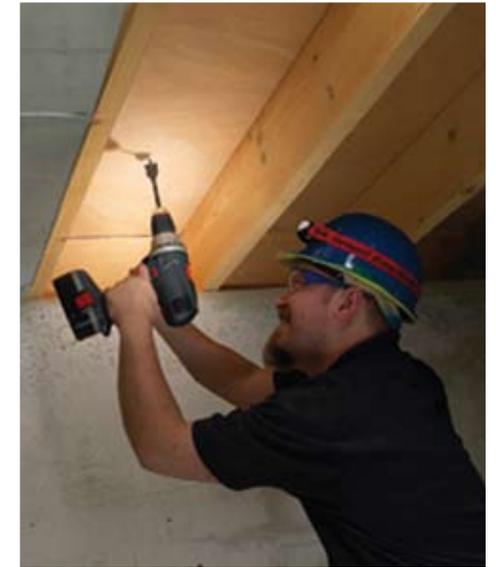


If you can't avoid overhead work, can you suspend tools or choose ones that are lighter and easier to use in awkward positions?



Can you take micro breaks to stretch your muscles and allow them to briefly go back into a natural position?

# Protect your shoulders and neck and your future



# Construction Ergonomics

## WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER

# Could this be you?

When Jim, a sheetmetal worker, bent over to move the 150-pound nitrogen bottle, he never imagined it would be the last time he'd have full strength in his hands. By the end of the week, the pain in his neck and shoulder was so bad he could only sleep on his back. He went to the doctor who found the 49-year-old's grip strength was that of a 70-year-old female. Bending over to move that bottle caused a disc to bulge, which pinched a nerve in his neck. Even today, after surgery on his neck, months of physical therapy, and six weeks of not working, Jim hasn't regained the full use of his right hand and never will.

## How would an injury impact your home life?

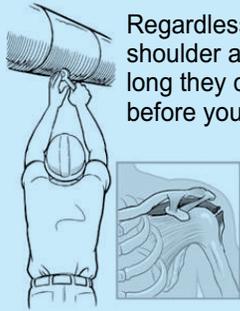
- Lower income
- Career change
- Loss of quality time with family

## What puts you at risk?

**Overexertion** is the leading cause of time-loss injuries for construction workers. Overexertion occurs because the load being lifted, carried, pushed, pulled, or otherwise handled exceeds the limits of the body. Overexertion can cause tearing or stretching of the muscles, tendons, or ligaments.



**Working overhead** is particularly risky because your neck is out of natural position and the full weight of your arms is being held in an awkward posture. This is especially hazardous if a lot of **force** is required to complete the task because you are putting excessive stress on your shoulder muscles.



Regardless of your physical condition, your shoulder and neck muscles have limits to how long they can be flexed in an awkward posture before you feel discomfort.

When you put excessive stress on your body by working in awkward positions, the tendons can become inflamed. Inflamed tendons take up more space, impede range of motion, and can eventually cause pain.

If you continue working through the discomfort, you may lose shoulder mobility and strength, and could be putting yourself at risk for a long-term injury.

**If you work smarter while doing this**

**Your shoulder and neck will be healthy enough for you to enjoy this**



**So what can you do?**

## For technical support, call the Oregon OSHA central office:

**Salem Central Office**  
350 Winter St. NE, Rm. 430  
Salem, OR 97301-3882  
Phone: 503-378-3272

Toll-free number in English:  
**1-800-922-2689**  
Toll-free number in Spanish:  
**1-800-843-8086, option 3**

## For a free consultation, call the Oregon OSHA field office nearest you:

<b>Portland</b>	503-229-6193
<b>Salem</b>	503-373-7819
<b>Eugene</b>	541-686-7913
<b>Medford</b>	541-776-6016
<b>Bend</b>	541-388-6068
<b>Pendleton</b>	541-276-2353

[www.orsosha.org](http://www.orsosha.org)

