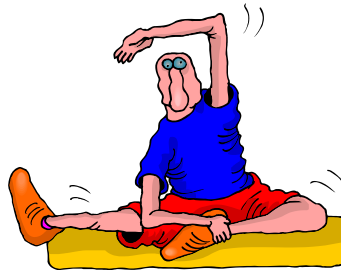


In 2009, the Service & Hospitality industry had 594 WCB Over Exertion claims. They cost us, as an industry \$1,575,264.94 and 11,032 lost time days.

Have you taken a stretch break today?



Why?

We're not designed to stay in one position all day long. Taking regular breaks to stretch major muscle groups can help reduce injury, muscular tension and stiffness.

Any job you work usually involves long hours each day and repetitive motion. While there's nothing wrong with that, if you aren't paying attention to your body, you could be potentially putting yourself at risk. You don't have to have a dangerous job in order to suffer a work-related injury. It can be as simple as sitting at your desk, standing at the front check-in counter or cleaning a guest room.

If you're wondering what you can do to lessen your chances of getting hurt at work, it really is as simple as stretching. What makes stretching so significant? Take into consideration the fact that the longer you sit or stand at work without any frequent breaks or time to stretch, you are putting yourself at greater risk of developing stiffness, neck, arm, wrist, hand, back and leg strain, as well as painful muscle tension. Small strains and stiffness may not seem like a big deal but the longer you ignore it, the worse it will get and if left untreated, can cause you to a lot of pain and discomfort. Tasks that used to be simple now become more difficult.

Stretching regularly will lengthen your muscles and tendons and make day-to-day life easier. For the purposes of stretching think of your muscles as large rubber bands. Just like an aging rubber band your aging muscles become tight, and brittle. By performing regular stretching exercises you increase circulation to your muscles to help keep them young, loose, and relaxed.

Stretching is important for people of all ages and all fitness levels. The more conditioned your muscles and tendons are, the better they can handle the rigors of work and exercise, and the less likely that they'll become injured. [A CONSISTENT stretching program will produce large gains in flexibility and joint movement.](#)

Stretching should not cause pain; if you are experiencing pain or have questions you should consult a healthcare professional.

~Cathy Davidson, Senior Safety Advisor

The SHSA would like to thank the [CBI Health Group](#) for providing us with the attached exercise handout.

These exercises are posted for your information. If you perform the exercises posted you assume full responsibility for any and all damages, injuries and losses that you may sustain.

Remember you should learn the proper technique for each stretch and start out slowly and carefully. If you already have tightness problems with certain parts of your body, such as your lower back, get advice from your health care professional on which exercises will help you the most.