Manual Handling Injury Prevention Stats and Facts

FACTS

Manual handling injuries fall into the category of work related musculoskeletal disorders (WRMSDs), other causes of WRMSDs include awkward/tiring positions, keyboard work or repetitive action, workplace accident and stress-

Most musculoskeletal injuries arise from just 5 causes:

1. stacking/unstacking containers (such as boxes, crates and sacks)
2. pushing wheeled racks (such as oven racks and trolleys of produce)
3. handling drinks containers (such as delivery of casks, kegs and crates).
4. packing products (such as cheese, confectionery and biscuits)
5. cutting, boning, jointing, trussing and evisceration (such as meat and poultry)

STATS

- According to the Health and Safety Executive approximately 120,000 people were injured at work from manual handling incidents last year. Over 30% of food and drink industry injuries reported to HSE are manual handling injuries such as back injuries, this represents around 1700 acute injuries per year. Manual handling injuries are caused by handling and lifting – 60% of the injuries involve lifting heavy objects.
- One in three accidents at work are caused by manual handling. Many manual handling incidents cause damage to the back.
- Every year, 300,000 people in the UK suffer from back pain due to manual handling accidents. Damage to the back, neck or spine can lead to extreme pain, temporary incapacity or permanent injury.
- Work related musculoskeletal disorders are more common injuries for those between the ages of 45-54 and those over 55. During the period of 2015-16 and 2017-18 males in the age categories 45-54 and 55+ suffered significantly higher rates than the average with 2,120 cases and 2,190 cases per 100,000 workers respectively. Females in the same age ranges also had significantly higher rates with 1,960 and 2,220 cases per 100,000 workers respectively.
- WRMSDs represent around 25% of all days lost due to work-related ill health in Great Britain in 2017/18, this equates to 6.5 million lost days. Out of this 6.5 million, work related upper limb disorders account for around 2.6 million days lost, with back disorders around 2.2 million and lower limb disorders causing 1.7 million.