

# Repetitive Strain Injury

**R**epetitive Strain Injury (RSI) occurs when a muscle, tendon, joint or nerve is exposed to repeated movements, excessive force, awkward postures, prolonged positioning or localized pressure beyond what an individual can tolerate. Not all individuals exposed to the same risk factors will experience similar symptoms.

RSI is also known as Cumulative Trauma Disorder (CTD), overuse syndrome, or repetitive motion injuries. Examples of RSI include: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, tendonitis, bursitis, Tennis Elbow, Raynauds disease, mechanical back pain, neck/shoulder strain, and Golfers' Elbow.

Some causes of RSI include awkward wrist/forearm positioning when keyboarding and mousing, neck flexion or extension when viewing a monitor, awkward neck posture when cradling a phone, prolonged standing or sitting in one position, bending over a low work bench for long periods of time, kneeling on a hard surface for extended periods, and even just prolonged sitting.

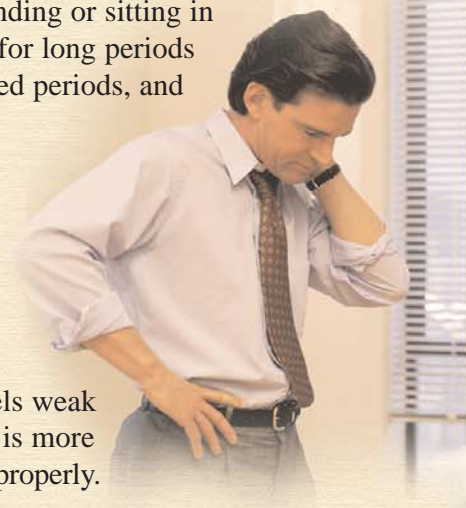
## THE 3 STAGES OF RSI

**Early:** The body aches and feels tired at work, but symptoms disappear during time away from work. The injury will heal completely if dealt with properly.

**Intermediate:** The injured area aches and feels weak near start of work until well after work. Work is more difficult. The injury will still heal if dealt with properly.

**Late:** The injured area aches and feels weak even at rest. Sleep is affected. Light duties are difficult and time is often lost from work. Depending on the nature of the injury and amount of damage done, full recovery may not occur at this stage.

*Early and professional intervention is the key to an early and safe return to work.*



# IOHS

INTEGRATED OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURIES?

- Pain
- Feeling “pins and needles”
- Joint stiffness
- Numbness
- Muscle tightness
- Skin colour changes
- Muscle weakness
- General tiredness/fatigue
- Redness and swelling
- A burning feeling

We may all feel these symptoms at some point at work without necessarily having a repetitive strain injury. The frequency and duration of these symptoms will be an important factor to consider.

## TREATMENT AND PREVENTION OF RSI

IOHS offers a wide range of services and treatments, including:

- ergonomic education sessions to help staff identify and prevent risks;
- ergonomic risk analysis to provide objective measurements of job-related risks and recommend methods of reducing risks;
- workstation reviews to identify the cause of the symptoms for an individual worker and recommend ways to maximize productivity; and
- functional screening assessments to determine the impact of an injury on an employee’s specific job performance.

Remember... *without addressing the cause of the problem, RSI is very likely to recur*, causing ongoing discomfort or pain, reduced productivity, and increased sick leave. IOHS focuses on the *prevention* of repetitive strain injuries, reducing pain and costs. Please call today for a free discussion of how IOHS can help you!

## Who is IOHS?

IOHS is one of Newfoundland and Labrador’s largest occupational health firms, caring for hundreds of companies and their workers since 1994. We set the standard in consultation, evaluations, and rehabilitation, and can manage all aspects of your workers’ health and fitness needs. IOHS specializes in assisting workers and companies with *Early and Safe Return to Work* (ESRTW) programs.

### — CLIENT ASSESSMENT SERVICES OFFERED BY IOHS —

Functional Capacity Evaluation • Functional Screening Assessment • Job Matching  
Functional Back Evaluation • Pre-Employment Screening

### — WORKSITE/HOME ASSESSMENT SERVICES OFFERED BY IOHS —

Job Site Analysis • Ergonomic Workstation Review  
Ergonomic Risk Analysis • Home Demands Analysis

### — TREATMENT PROGRAMS OFFERED BY IOHS —

Return to Work (RTW) Services • Work Hardening • Work Conditioning  
Education/Ergonomic Consultation • Back Injury Prevention Program (BIPP)  
Lifestyle Counselling • Group Fitness Testing • Design/monitoring of Fitness Programs  
Customized Splinting • Foot Assessment and Customized Orthotics



# IOHS

INTEGRATED OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES