



Toolbox Talk — Instructor Guide for Hair Stylists

Musculoskeletal Injuries (MSIs) Topic Overview

Hair stylists and other workers in the service sector perform tasks in uncomfortable positions for extended periods of time, and may repeat the same movements. These tasks can put strain on the body and can result in musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs). MSIs are injuries or disorders of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves, or blood vessels. Some common MSIs include muscle or tendon strains, ligament sprains, and tendonitis. Signs and symptoms of MSIs include redness, swelling, numbness, tingling, stiffness, pain, and difficulty moving a particular body part. Signs and symptoms may appear suddenly, or they may develop over a long period of time. Employers are required to identify risks of MSIs and to control or eliminate them where possible.

Demonstration and Discussion Topics

- Discuss** the hazards or tasks in the shop that may produce MSIs.
- Tour the shop** with the students, and point out the hazards.
- Distribute** the student handout.
- Review** the safety tips.
- Make it real.** Tell at least two stories of injuries from your experience, or use the following examples:

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“MSIs are injuries or disorders of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves, or blood vessels.”

- A hair stylist began to notice that their wrist and hand became sore after only a few minutes. It progressed to where they could no longer hold scissors without dropping them. She was diagnosed as having carpal tunnel syndrome.
- A young hair stylist routinely went home with a sore back. They were diagnosed with back strain.
- Discuss** the attitude that “it won’t happen to me”. Remind students that an injury can and will happen if they take shortcuts or are careless.
- Educate** students to be able to identify and report any safety concerns about MSI hazards.
- Encourage them to **ASK** questions.
- Answer** any questions or concerns students have.
- Set a good example** by working safely at all times.

Resources

- Understanding MSIs – educational guide for workers**
www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/msi_workers.pdf
- Does your back hurt?**
www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/does_your_back_hurt.pdf

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