

Ergonomics – Know your Body

KNOW YOUR BODY

Custodians, janitors, and housekeepers suffer injuries that frequently involve bone, cartilage, muscle, and nerves. The most common body parts affected are the following: back, shoulders, neck, arms, wrist/hands/fingers, knees, ankles, and elbows.

WHAT CAUSES INJURIES?

Certain actions can lead to fatigue, discomfort, or pain when you do them over and over without a break. These are:

- Exerting force to perform a task or to use a tool (e.g., lifting corners of mattresses or scrubbing with a brush)
- Working in awkward postures, such as bending or twisting the back to clean the tub, overhead reaching for dusting, or mopping with elbows away from the body
- Remaining in the same position for a long time with little or no movement
- Continuous pressure from a hard surface or edge on any part of the body (for example, kneeling or crawling while cleaning floor)
- Working in very hot or cold temperatures
- Holding equipment that vibrates (for example, the handle of a pressure washer)

REPORT INJURIES

Be sure to report right away any injuries to your supervisor. If you feel discomfort, pain, or other symptoms, you must either change the way you work or the equipment you use. If no changes are made, your symptoms may get worse and keep you from working at all. You may have a problem if you have any of these symptoms:

- Constant fatigue
- Changes in skin color of hands and fingertips
- Cold hands
- Weakness or reduced grip strength
- Swelling
- Loss of sensation
- Numbness
- Aching, burning, or shooting pain
- Tingling
- Decreased range of motion

If you develop any symptoms:

- Talk with your supervisor about your symptoms right away.
- If necessary, seek medical treatment to prevent the problem from getting worse.
- Work with your supervisor to find the cause and solution for the cause of the problem.

Be safe today and remain a Buckeye tomorrow.