

CONSTRUCTIVE Ideas

Innovative Ideas to Reduce Soft Tissue Injuries in the Construction Industry



Overcome the “Don’t sit on the job” attitude and your body will thank you

Working on a construction site requires tasks to be performed at all levels, from floor to overhead. This means that a worker’s back is often placed in awkward positions. Standing all day can also be demanding for the back, legs, and feet.

When performing tasks at lower levels, workers tend either to:

- Stoop from the waist – which stretches the ligaments and can place the spine in an unstable position
- Squat – which is an unstable position, leaving the body unbalanced and unprepared for an unexpected load change, such as pulling or pushing an object that suddenly moves

Sitting down, when the opportunity is available, is an alternative that can reduce the stress on your body.

Benefits of sitting while you work

If you need to work at a low level, sitting down can:

- Reduce the strain on your back from stooping
- Reduce leg fatigue from holding a squatting position
- Allow your feet to be flat on the floor with your ankles in their natural position instead of balancing on the balls of your feet and stretching the tendons at the backs of your ankles
- Provide a solid three-point base of support between your feet and buttocks

Tips for sitting down to do the job

- Select a stool that is stable and can support your weight.
- Place the stool close to your work, to minimize long reaches in front or to the side of your body.
- Lift carefully from a sitting position. Do not lift heavy items from a sitting position because the strength of your legs will not contribute to the lift.

Sitting down to perform tasks at low levels can help reduce the physical demands you place on your body. Next time you have low level work to do, look around for something you can use to sit on. Your body will thank you.

