



RSI Day February 28, 2022

What is RSI Day?

Every year on the last day of February, the occupational health and safety community comes together to raise awareness on Repetitive Strain Injuries, also called musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs).

RSIs are a family of injuries affecting tendons, tendon sheaths, muscles, nerves and joints. They cause persistent or recurring pains, most commonly in the neck, shoulders, forearms, hands, wrists, elbows and lower limbs. The injuries can be caused by or in combination with force, rapid movement, overuse, static loading, excessive strain, uncomfortable positioning of limbs or holding one's posture in an unnatural, constrained or constricted position.

Why do we raise awareness about RSIs?

In Ontario, RSIs account for about 50% of all lost-time days and 40% of all lost-time claims approved by the Workplace Safety & Insurance Board. Unfortunately, far too many RSIs are not recognized or reported as workplace injuries. Many workers are unfamiliar with RSIs, so everyday aches and pains are overlooked, and no connection is made between the injury and the workplace.

Aches and pains are an indication that a serious injury may be developing. If the causes of the injury are not eliminated or the worker is not moved from the injuring job or task immediately, the damage can be permanent and irreversible. Sometimes the injury is crippling, leaving the worker in pain and possibly immobile for life.

Because repetitive strain injuries have numerous causes affecting a variety of areas, eliminating them demands a comprehensive prevention program. The cornerstone of such a program must be to make the job fit the person rather than make the person fit the job.

Under Ontario's *Occupational Health & Safety Act* and regulations, employers have a general duty to identify, assess and control or eliminate exposure to all hazards, including those which can contribute to the development of RSIs and MSDs. Further, the employer must ensure that workers are trained on the hazards that may cause an injury. Worker training could include instruction and information on how to carry out repetitive or physical tasks safely, the proper use of tools and equipment, manual lifting procedures, maintaining an ergonomically safe workstation, taking rest breaks, and early recognition of injury.

How can I participate in RSI Day?

- **Awareness**
 - Download, share and post the CUPE fact sheet on Repetitive Strain Injuries ([English/French](#))
 - Download, share and post these posters and infographics from CCOHS ([English/French](#))
 - Perform a basic self-assessment
 - Download the [Pain Point App to your mobile phone](#). The Pain Point app is a basic first step assessment that will help you recognize the signs of injury and take action for prevention.



- **Attend a webinar**

- During the month of February, the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) is hosting a series of four webinars related to RSIs and MSDs:
 - Week 1 - February 10, 2022 – 10-12 EST: **Musculoskeletal Disorders** (Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and Prevention & Thoracic Outlet Syndrome);
 - Week 2 - February 17, 2022 – 10-12 EST: **Integrating Components for a Return-to-Work (RTW) Program** (Understanding the Elements of a Physical Demand Analysis (PDA)/ Physical Demand Description (PDD), Components of a Functional Abilities Exam (FAE) & Utilizing a PDA/PDD and FAE to Determine Return to Work (RTW));
 - Week 3 - February 24, 2022 – 10-12 EST: **Ergonomics for Specific Occupations** (Ergonomics and Custodians/Housekeepers & Ergonomics and Carpenters);
 - Week 4 - February 28, 2022 – 10-12 EST : **Ergonomic Prevention Tools** (PainPoint App & Rapid Upper Limb Assessment (RULA) Part 2).
- Register and see past RSI Day webinars - <https://www.ohcow.on.ca/events/repetitive-strain-injury-rsi-day/>.

Where can I learn more about RSIs?

Find out more about RSIs and MSDs from following resources and websites.

Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)

- Repetitive Strain Injuries – Facts Sheet ([English/French](#))
- Hazard Prevention Program ([English/French](#))
- Hazard vs Risk ([English/French](#))

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)

- International Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) Awareness Day ([English/French](#))

Centre for Research and Expertise – Musculoskeletal Disorders (CRE-MSD)

- [MSD Prevention Guideline for Ontario](#)

Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW)

- [Workplace Ergonomics](#)

Workers Health and Safety Centre (WHSC)

- [Manual Material Lifting: a pain in the neck, back ...](#)
- [MSDs of the Upper Body: from recognition to resolution](#)
- [Patient Lifting: handle with care](#)
- [Prolonged Standing: taking the load off](#)
- [Sitting on the Job: static load, chronic pain](#)