## Ergonomic Breaks, Rest Periods, and Stretches Stats and Facts

## **FACTS**

- 1. Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) affect the muscles, nerves, blood vessels, ligaments and tendons.
- Ergonomics fitting a job to a person helps lessen muscle fatigue, increases productivity and reduces the number and severity of work-related MSDs.
- 3. The severity of ergonomic hazards often depends on the level of exposure over time.
- 4. Ergonomic hazards are often a result of the way a space is designed.
- 5. An ergonomic hazard is a factor in a work, or other environment that could cause damage to the human musculoskeletal system. These hazards include repetitive strain injury, discomfort in an office chair or desk, poor design of a particular job or task at a workplace that causes injury, manual handling of heavy loads, and anything in the environment that leads to uncomfortable or unnatural body positioning that can lead to injury.
- Research shows injuries are down and productivity is increased when employers encourage stretch breaks and stress the importance of ergonomics.
- 7. Hundreds of thousands of workers sit at a computer or desk all day long. But experts say it doesn't matter where the sitting takes place at the office, at school, or in the car; in front of a computer or in front of a television screen it's the overall number of hours spent sitting that matters most.

## **STATS**

Stretching is beneficial to the overall health of the body and plays a role in reducing musculoskeletal disorders among

- employees. MSD's account for more than 600,000 injuries and illnesses and 34 % of all workdays lost.
- Inactivity or being sedentary increases the pressure on spinal discs by about 40 % more than standing.
- Each year for the past five years, between 17,000 and 18,000 injures at work via a sprain, strain or back injury.
- The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) USA has predicted that 50% of the work force will suffer from RSIs (of all kinds).
- Around 1.1 million people suffered from MSDs caused or made worse by work.
- An estimated 12.3 million working days were lost due to work-related MSDs and on average each sufferer took 19.4 days off. These figures include upper limb disorders from which approximately 400,000 people suffered, resulting in a loss of around four million working days in the same period.