Severity and Frequency Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. Musculoskeletal disorders are categorized into six groups: rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, lower back pain, neck pain, gout and “other.” This last category included all other musculoskeletal disorders, such as systemic lupus erythematosus, axial spondyloarthropathies and other inflammatory arthritis diseases.
2. Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), sometimes called “ergonomic injuries”, occur when the body uses muscles, tendons, and ligaments to perform tasks, often in awkward positions or in frequent activities which over time can create pain and injury. Overexertion and repetitive motion are the primary causes of these injuries.
3. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics’ publication “The Economics Daily” examined different kinds of work-related musculoskeletal disorders. The data shows that work-related musculoskeletal disorders that require days away from work often involve back injuries alone.

STATS

- In 2018, there were 900,380 DAFW cases in the U.S. private sector with 272,780 (or 30 percent) being MSD cases. The incidence rate of MSD cases was 27.2 per 10,000 full time workers in 2018. The median days away from work for MSD cases was 12 in 2018.
- The global point prevalence rate of musculoskeletal disorders in 2017 was higher in women than men and increased with age up to the oldest age group. Globally, the proportion of prevalent cases in 2017 was greatest for low back pain, at 36.8%; followed by “other” at 21.5%; osteoarthritis at 19.3%; neck pain at 18.4%; gout at 2.6%;

and rheumatoid arthritis at 1.3%.

- In 2016, musculoskeletal disorders involving the back made up 38.5 percent of all work-related musculoskeletal disorders, or 134,550 back cases out of 349,050 total cases.
- Some occupations seem to generate more musculoskeletal disorders than others. Nursing assistants experienced 10,330 back-related musculoskeletal disorder cases in 2016, while laborers and hand material movers experienced 10,660. Those two occupations alone made-up 15.6 percent of all back-related cases in 2016. Other occupations where work-related musculoskeletal disorders are prevalent are janitors and cleaners, stock clerks and order fillers, maintenance and repair workers, and tractor-trailer truck drivers. Heavy tractor-trailer truck drivers had a greater proportion of injuries that affected the shoulder (19.2 percent) and leg (16.3 percent).