

Under strain in your arms – where’s the pain?

Our bodies are designed for movement – but if it’s too heavy, too awkward, too often or for too long our bodies complain.

All health and safety laws require action is taken to reduce the risk of injury from hazardous manual handling – manual handling is the use of force to lift, pull, carry or hold any object.

Sprains and strains are the most common work related injury. If there is pain some changes may be needed to make tasks less hazardous. Tasks can be designed to remove the problem eg decreasing the force required to grip a tool or dampening the vibration of a power tool.

Its vitality important we change our posture regularly – work design needs to allow work breaks, different tasks, use of different muscle groups, times to walk/standup/sit down.

SHOULDER PAIN	POSSIBLE CAUSES
<i>Top of shoulder</i>	Repetitive forceful arm movements
	Work too high
	Tension
	Stress
<i>Behind shoulder</i>	Work too high
	Work too far away
<i>Outer Shoulder</i>	Elbows held out from side of body
	Tools or parts too far to one side
	Same as for top of shoulder
<i>Between shoulder blades</i>	Work too far away
	Leaning forward to see work
	Stress
ARM PAIN	
<i>Forearm – upper surface [extensors]</i>	Excessive force used – heavy, awkward or inefficient posture used
	Hand stretched whilst forearm is rested
	Lack of pauses or poor variety of work
<i>Forearm – under surface [flexors]</i>	Tool used forcefully with bent wrist
	Excessive squeezing force
	Small components used or high precision needed
HAND PAIN	
<i>Little finger side of hand</i>	Overstretching of fingers
	Hammering action
<i>Thumb</i>	Awkward thumb angle
	Tool using thumb pressure
	Forceful action needed by thumb eg creasing materials

Report pain. Talk to your H&S Rep. Seek medical advice if pain persists.

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