

# YOURHEALTH

Duradiamond Newsletter November 2019



Duradiamond  
Building Healthy Business



MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS :  
ARE YOU FIT FOR WORK?

- LUNG CANCER
- COPD
- DIABETES

# MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS

## ARE YOU FIT FOR WORK?

Many of us spend a large proportion of our time at work and we are often too busy to make time to think about how it affects our health and wellbeing. Office workers in particular, spend a lot of time sitting still and carrying out repetitive tasks. Our bodies are not designed for this and prolonged sitting may cause musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) such as lower back pain, neck or wrist problems.

### Helpful tips for office workers:

- Rotate your tasks: alternate computer and telephone use or, even better, go to speak to someone face to face if you are in the same building.
- Make sure you have a headset if you use the telephone or Skype regularly and stand up if you can when you are on the phone.
- Maintain a good posture: avoid slumping/slouching if you can.
- Ensure your work station equipment has been assessed and your chair is set up for you and is supportive.
- Try to get out of the office every day, e.g. at lunch time, for some fresh air.
- Report any health problems to your employer as soon as possible.
- Try simple desk-based stretching exercises <https://www.csp.org.uk/public-patient/keeping-active-and-healthy/staying-healthy-work/desk-based-exercises>.



Those in more active jobs can also suffer from MSDs, particularly if they are not trained in manual handling or safe moving. You should try and eliminate movements that are not benefiting your health and might be limiting your productivity. Movements you should look to avoid include:

- Prolonged, awkward or uncomfortable positions
- Using too much force
- Placing too much strain on one side of your body repetitively or for prolonged periods.

Also, keep an active lifestyle outside work.

### Helpful tips for active workers:

- Use safe techniques. Request tailored training for your tasks and follow the advice.
- Use any tools provided to help you do your job correctly.
- Warm up a little before lifting, pushing, pulling anything, etc to prepare your body for heavy or repetitive work.
- Adopt good work postures.
- Report any symptoms to your employer promptly.
- Follow your employer's health and safety procedures: they are there for a good reason.

# TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND READ ON...

**Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is the name for a group of lung conditions that cause breathing difficulties. It includes emphysema (damage to the air sacs in the lungs) and chronic bronchitis (long-term inflammation of the airways).**

COPD is a common condition that mainly affects middle-aged or older adults who smoke. Many people don't realise they have it. The main symptoms of COPD are:

- Increasing breathlessness, particularly when you're active
- A persistent chesty cough with phlegm: some people may dismiss this as just a "smoker's cough"
- Frequent chest infections
- Persistent wheezing.



See your GP or Occupational Health (OH) provider if you have persistent symptoms of COPD, particularly if you're over 35 and smoke or used to smoke.

Make sure you attend any scheduled lung function testing if you are part of a health surveillance programme at work so the OH team can monitor you.

## Lung cancer alert!

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among both men and women. Each year, more people die of lung cancer than of colon, breast, and prostate cancers combined. Symptoms may include (but are not limited to):

- A cough that won't go away
- A change in a cough you have had for a long time, or it may sound different
- Being short of breath
- Coughing up blood: this may be small amounts of blood
- An ache or pain in the chest or shoulder
- Loss of appetite or losing weight
- Feeling very tired (fatigue) a lot
- Ongoing chest infections: you may have chest infections most of the time or you might have a chest infection that doesn't get better with treatment
- Some people have clubbed fingernails (convex nailbed shape) but this is also associated with other conditions and may be inherited.

These symptoms may be for something else but speak to your GP or OH provider if you have any concerns.

## DON'T LET DIABETES BEAT YOU!

Diabetes is a serious condition that causes a person's blood sugar (glucose) level to become too high. There are two main types of diabetes mellitus: Type 1 diabetes and Type 2 diabetes:

- **Type 1** normally occurs in children or young adults. It's a serious, lifelong condition where your blood glucose level is too high because your body can't make a hormone called insulin. It's not caused by your lifestyle; rather, it's an autoimmune condition.
- **Type 2** is more associated with being chronically overweight and most often occurs in people over 40; however, it's increasingly being diagnosed in children and young adults.

Anyone with diabetes needs to follow a healthy lifestyle and diet, maintain an ideal body weight, take regular exercise and not smoke. People with Type 1 diabetes are usually treated with insulin injections and Type 2 diabetics with tablets.

The symptoms when you first develop diabetes may include:

- Being very thirsty a lot of the time
- Passing a lot of urine
- Tiredness, weight loss and feeling unwell
- Wounds taking longer to heal
- Repeatedly getting thrush or itchiness.