

Job Name: _____ Job Site Location: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

Topic 21: First Aid for Muscle Strains

Introduction: Muscle strains are among the most common injuries suffered in the workplace. Sore backs, stiff necks, and pulled muscles result in missed work and needless pain. A little care to prepare for work can reduce the number of injuries due to muscle strains. Proper first aid applied after suffering a muscle strain can help you recover quicker. Follow these guidelines to help treat, and prevent muscle strains:

Stretching prior to work: A person should stretch only after warming up, when the muscles are warm and less likely to tear. The most effective method of warming up is slowly going through the actual motions of the exercise or work to be performed at a relaxed pace for 3 to 10 minutes. A person should stretch after warming up or exercising, and each stretch should be comfortable enough to hold for a count of ten. Stretching lengthens muscles and tendons, and allows longer muscles to generate more force around the joints, contract more efficiently, and perform better. In order to avoid muscle strains it is important to stretch for five or ten minutes prior to work. To make this time truly effective follow these tips:

- Stretch your hamstrings
- Stretch your quadriceps
- Stretch your Achilles tendons
- Stretch your arms and shoulders



- Stretch your neck
- Stretch your groin
- Stretch your back



What to do after suffering a muscle strain: Immediate treatment for almost all muscle strains consists of rest, ice, compression, and elevation.

- **Immediately stop** the activity that caused the strain. The injured part is rested immediately to minimize swelling and prevent the injury from becoming worse.
- **Ice causes** the blood vessels to constrict, helping to limit inflammation and reduce pain. Place an ice pack or chemical cold pack on the affected area for 10 minutes, then remove it for 10 minutes, repeat over a period of 1 to 1 ½ hours. This process can be repeated several times over the first 24 hours.
- **Wrapping the injured part** with an elastic bandage (compression) and raising the injured part above the level of the heart (elevation) helps limit swelling.
- **Do not** place hot packs on the affected area for at least 24 hours (heat will increase swelling and severity of the injury). Place hot packs on the affected area for 15 to 20 minutes every 2 hours after the first 24 hours
- **Anti inflammatory agents** like aspirin or ibuprofen may reduce swelling and pain (seek the advice of a health care professional before taking any medication).
- **Begin light stretching** of the affected area 72 hours after the injury.
- **If the muscle strain** does not improve within 72 to 96 hours, see a physician.



Conclusion: A program of planned physical exercise will help you maintain fitness, and help strengthen and stretch your muscles. Strengthening and stretching your muscles will help prevent muscle strain, and reduce the chance of job-site injury. Consult your physician before beginning any exercise program.



Work Site Review

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions: _____

Personnel Safety Violations: _____

Material Safety Data Sheets Reviewed: _____ (Name of Chemical)

Employee Signatures:

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)

City of San Angelo Foreman/Supervisor's Signature: _____

These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations