

**Discussion Leader:**  
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**Attendance Sign- In:**  
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**Summary**  
Workplace Safety Index (WSI) in an annual report states that “overexertion tops the list of the 10 causes of the most serious disabling workplace injuries – those leading to more than five missed workdays.” The 2023 WSI states that injuries from overexertion involving outside sources accounts for \$12.8 billion annually. The four main causes of overexertion are listed below: [2023 WSI Report](#)

**Guide for Discussion**

**EXCESSIVE EFFORT**  
**CAUSES:**

- Straining when holding/carrying a heavy object like a box or crate
- Pulling a muscle when pushing a cart or sudden movements

**PREVENTION:**

- Use proper form and lifting techniques, such as looking forward throughout the lift with feet shoulder width apart.
- Ask a co-worker for help when lifting or carrying heavy objects instead of shouldering all the weight yourself.
- Provide lifting aids.

**REPETITIVE STRAIN or PROLONGED BODY MOTION**  
**CAUSES:**

- Using tools or performing tasks that require repetitive motion without a break
- Poor posture or body positioning during the workday
- Sudden, awkward, or forceful movements while positioned at an awkward angle

**PREVENTION:**

- Build short breaks into the daily schedule so workers can stretch and relax their muscles. Start a routine before and after work where workers can warm up and cool down any affected muscles too.
- Set-up schedules so workers perform repetitive tasks at varied times throughout the day rather than just within a single block of time.
- Set-up or rearrange jobsites to minimize the number of ways workers need to awkwardly position.

**OVERHEATING**  
**CAUSES**

- Working too hard in the heat to the point of developing symptoms such as cramps, pale skin, headaches, loss of muscle function, or collapse.

**PREVENTION:**

- Go over recognizable heat illness symptoms and signs
- Provide cool water or electrolyte-replacing beverages and encourage employees to stay hydrated before, during, and after work.
- Organize your schedules so they work for increasing amounts of time in heat or work in the shade or cool when possible.
- Use the buddy system

**Additional Discussion Notes:**  
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