

17 **1) Provide advice on health care options**

- For discomfort or injury
 - see a doctor
 - discuss a referral to a musculoskeletal specialist (e.g. sports injury clinic)
 - [Sports injury clinics on campus](#)

18 **2) What activities does the employee find difficult?**

19 **People can become defensive if asked a lot of questions**

When you meet, try to put the employee at ease:

- Thank you for coming to me with this problem.
- So that we can come up with a solution together, I need to ask some questions.
- Can you tell me more about the difficulty you're having?
- What activities are you having difficulty with?

20 **Other Useful Questions**

- Could you help me understand why you did/didn't do that?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?
- Could you give me an example so I can better understand this?
- I'm not sure I understand. Can you explain a little more?
- Ok, let's see if I have this right. What I think you are saying is...

22 **3) Review body mechanics**

- One on one review of body mechanics (DOHS can help you with this)
- If less urgent, Material Handling/Back Safety workshop
 - Refresher every 3 years
 - [OHS Ergonomics information and workshops](#)
- Although providing training in proper body mechanics is important, it is not always the most effective intervention:
 - The safe way may be slower or less convenient.
 - Employees may forget.
 - There may be situations where it is not possible to use proper body mechanics.

23 **4) Could the activities be made easier? (see Activity Improvement Tool)**

24 **Time saver tips**

- Share Activity Improvement Tool with employees ahead of time to help them prepare for your meeting
 - Employee with concern
 - JHSCs
 - CSBO Leadership groups
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26 **Engineering controls**

- Engineering controls (e.g. better tools)
 - Greater likelihood of success than administrative controls (e.g. training)
 - But not always feasible in the short term
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- Administrative controls:
 - Requires employees to do things the right way...
 - But employees don't always do things the right way

- Everyone makes mistakes
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- 27 **If the employee is experiencing discomfort...**
- Examine the activity being performed when the discomfort started.
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 - Ask the employee about other activities that were not a problem before, but may be now.
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 - If the employee is currently not at work
 - talk with them when they return.
- 28 **If more than one activity is difficult...**
- Refer to your list of all the difficult activities
 - Prioritize
 - Ask employees to rate the level of difficulty for each activity to help prioritize areas for improvement
 - Example:
 - some difficulty
 - moderate difficulty
 - almost impossible
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- 29 **What are the physical demands/hazards that caused (or could be causing) the difficulty?**
- Source for the graphics on this and the following slides:
Occupational Health and Safety Council of Ontario, [Musculoskeletal Disorders Prevention Series](#), Part 3A: MSD Prevention Toolbox: Getting Started
- 47 **Are there any other details about the difficulties (*continued*)?**
- More details about...
- Physical demands?
 - Contributing factors?
 - When does the difficulty happen?
 - Whenever the activity is performed?
 - Only under certain conditions?
 - etc
- 48 **What improvements could be considered?**
- Sources of ideas and assistance:
- Observing the activity
 - Talking with employees who perform this activity
 - particularly the biggest and the smallest
 - Health and Safety Officers
 - Leadership Groups (CSBO)
 - Joint Health and Safety Committee members or Health and Safety Representatives
 - Equipment manufacturers and suppliers
 - Trade associations
 - Other institutions performing similar work
 - [OHS](#)
- 51 **4.1) Should the employee be getting help with the activity?**
- If employees aren't asking for help when they should, what are the possible barriers to asking for/getting help? How could they be addressed?

- "Would have taken too long."
- "No one around to ask for help."
- "Thought I could do it by myself."
- etc
- Should getting help be mandatory for specified difficult activities (e.g. lifting extremely awkward/heavy items)?
- Would improved communications help?

52 **4.2) Procedure compliance / Work method (see Procedure Compliance Tool)**

53 **Procedure: What do they do?**

- ¹ Ask the employee to describe what they do when they experience the discomfort or difficulty.
Review this at the worksite with the equipment involved
Be careful about asking the employee to demonstrate, especially if they have been injured.
You may wish to simulate what they were doing, instead.
Based on their answers, did they use the proper procedure and equipment?

- ² Sample question:

"So that I can help you with this, could you help me understand exactly what you do when you experience the discomfort?"

54 **Is the proper procedure used?**

If YES, skip this section (link below).

If NO,

What is the difference between the proper procedure and what the employee actually does/did?

Why did they do it that way?

Continue to ask why until you understand exactly why they did it that way ("root cause analysis").

61 **5) Evaluate any changes made to make sure they are working**

- Evaluate changes at a later date
 - Are they helping?
 - Any unexpected problems?
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- Check in with the employee the day after changes were made.
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- Depending on the outcome of this initial follow up, daily or weekly follow ups should be scheduled until the concern is resolved.
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- Tool
- [Ergonomics Change Evaluation Tool \(PDF\) \(DOC\)](#)

62 **6) Communicate lessons learned to other staff**

- Make others aware of lessons learned from this process, in order to reinforce the importance of using preventive measures.
 - Do not share the identity of the affected employee without getting approval from him/her first.
- Encourage early reporting of problems