



STRAIN/SPRAINS

A strain refers to an injury to the muscles and tendons, while a sprain is an injury to ligaments and joints. In 2022, one third of work-related injuries at the UO resulted in a strain or a sprain. Although often mild, strain/sprain injuries can be painful and may require an extended recovery period. A closer examination of the 2022 strain/sprain injuries indicated 62% needed first aid, but no medical treatment, 16% required evaluation or treatment by a medical professional, and 21% were more severe resulting in both medical treatment and time away from work.

Strains/sprains are often associated with more physically active jobs that require activities such as lifting, carrying, and pushing/pulling. Employees doing any type of work can be at risk for a strain/sprain injury. For example, awkward body positions can result in a strain/sprain. An awkward body position is one that moves the body away from a neutral or more comfortable position. Slip, trip, and/or falls (S/T/Fs) can also result in strain/sprains. At the UO, S/T/Fs occur as much or more indoors as outdoors, so always be aware of your surroundings including indoor pathways and outdoor walkways.

WHAT TO DO!

- Always use proper lifting techniques and ask for help when needed.
- When performing a task that can be done right or left-handed, frequently change sides to prevent overexertion on one side.
- Avoid working in an uncomfortable or awkward position for an extended period. If you need to temporarily work in an awkward position, take frequent microbreaks to change your body position.
- Don't carry multiple items or large, heavy, or awkward loads. Use carts or dollies.
- To avoid working in an awkward position at the computer, ensure monitors, keyboards, and pointing devices (mice) are at comfortable heights and placed directly in front of the body.

WHAT TO KNOW!

- EHS has ergonomic and material handling training on [MyTrack](#) and staff are also available to do in-person training.
- Ergonomic assessments are available for all employees. Complete the "Request an Assessment" form on the [Ergonomics](#) webpage.
- Fill out the Workplace Injury Report within 24 hours of the incident. The form is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
- In the event of an emergency, call **911** and **UOPD** (541-346-2919) for immediate assistance.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON ERGONOMICS: MOVING STUFF!

MOVING STUFF
is something we all do at one time or another. It may be a regular job duty for some people, such as restocking supplies or moving computer equipment. For others, MOVING stuff is infrequent, such as packing for an office move or picking up a box left by a delivery service. Whatever the case may be, MOVING involves physical activity such as lifting, carrying, reaching, pushing or pulling. When any of these actions are done improperly, it can lead to a strain or sprain injury. Slip, trips or falls are also risks associated with MOVING. Please read the following tips to avoid injury and ensure you are MOVING safely.

MOVING TIPS!

- Use Material Handling Equipment. MOVING items that are heavy, large or awkward with a dolly, hand truck or cart can ease the physical stress on the body.
- Travel by Elevator. When possible, avoid stairs and use an elevator even if it takes a little more time. Carrying items up or down stairs may result in a slip, trip or fall.
- Stay Within Your Ability. Unsure whether you can lift something by yourself? Ask for help.
- Let It Go. If a load shifts or something begins to fall, let it drop. UO employees have sustained strains, bruises, lacerations and even fractures while trying to catch something that was falling.
- Supportive Shoes. Wear shoes that will maximize your stability. Closed toe shoes will help avoid injury if something is dropped.
- Use Good Body Positions. This includes:
 - Elbows Close. When possible, keep the elbows within 6" of the side of the body. Reaching further away from the body, increases stress on the arms, shoulders, neck, and back.

For more information about body position and techniques, check out the [Moving Stuff Safety Sheet!](#)

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON WORKPLACE INJURY OR ILLNESS REPORT

Safety and Risk Services
1260 University of Oregon
1715 Franklin Blvd., Suite 2A
Phone: 541-346-3102
Fax: 541-346-7129
workinjury@uoregon.edu

Instructions: To be completed by employee with a lead staff member, supervisor or manager **WITHIN 24 HOURS** of when employee reports a work-related injury, illness, or near miss. **Complete ALL sections, do not leave any blanks.**

Department _____ Date of Report _____
Date of Incident _____ Time of Incident _____ a.m. _____ p.m. _____
or illness _____ or illness _____

Employee Information:

Employee Name _____ Last _____ First _____ MI _____
Employee ID# _____ Birth Date _____ Position Title _____
Employee Category: Regular, full-time Temporary UO Student Worker
 Regular, part-time Temporary Agency Volunteer

Working Days: M T W T F S S Working Hours _____

Injury Information:

Nature of injury or illness: Burn Inflammation/irritation Bruised by: _____
 Bruise Scratches/abrasions Cut by: _____
 Cut Sprain/strain Contact with: _____
 No injury Other _____ Struck by: _____

Body Part Affected: Left Right Both **Falls/Trips:** Slips/Trips Strains/Strains Other _____
 Twisting

Treatment: Received 1st aid Different level Lifting Bending/squatting
 Will be seeking medical treatment Weather condition Pushing/pulling
 Received medical treatment Over object Reaching
(in file worker's compensation claim) On sidewalk/path Receptive motion
complete (80 forms) On stairs Stairs
 Hospital transport* Footwear Twisting/turning
 Fatality* Rushing Walking

Fill out the [Workplace Injury Report](#) if an incident/injury occurs!

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Ergonomic Assessment Request

Please complete the request below and we will be touch very soon.

Date of Request: _____

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Your Department: _____

Position Title: _____

To request an ergonomic assessment, use the "Request an Assessment" form on the [Ergonomics](#) webpage.

