



Toolbox Talk

Repetitive Strain Injury – RSI

What is RSI?

RSI stands for Repetitive Strain Injury and includes damage to tendons, nerves, muscles and other soft tissue usually caused by overuse and repeated physical movements, such as typing and using a mouse.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms include tightness, discomfort, soreness, burning, tingling, coldness, numbness, as well as feeling a need to massage your hands, wrists, and arms.

Prevention is Better Than Cure

Tips to Prevent RSI

- ✔ Take regular breaks from your work. Use a light touch on the keyboard, if your typing annoys people sitting near you, you are probably doing it too hard and are putting yourself at risk of injury.
- ✔ Trying to remember to type lightly will have 2 benefits, you may prevent painful RSI and you may also stop annoying your colleagues.
- ✔ Hold the mouse lightly – try using your weaker hand. It will feel strange at first, but you can quickly adapt, and it will give the hand you normally use a break. You are also less likely to grip it too hard if you use your weaker hand. You can change the setting on your computer to switch the left click, right click buttons around if you find that more comfortable.
- ✔ Don't stretch to reach the stuff you use a lot. When typing or using your mouse, your elbows should be close to your body.
- ✔ If you are going to be using the mouse a lot, such as when reading documents, push your keyboard back and move your mouse closer to the middle of your desk.
- ✔ If you are not using the mouse, try not to get in the habit of resting your hand on it.

If you are beginning to feel the symptoms of overuse, don't ignore it, early intervention can help prevent further damage and reverse what has already occurred.

Summary

- ✔ Beware of overuse and repeated physical movements that cause pain
- ✔ Take regular breaks from work
- ✔ Keep your workspace ergonomically friendly

