Meat Packing Stats & Facts



Work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs) are associated with these factors:

- Work postures and movements
- Repetitiveness and pace of work
- Force of movements
- Vibration
- Temperature
- Lack of influence or control over one’s job
- Increase pressure (e.g., to produce more)
- Lack of or poor communication
- Monotonous tasks
- Perception of low support (e.g., manager or co-worker)

Certain workplace conditions, for example, the layout of the workstation, the speed of work (especially in conveyor-driven jobs), and the weight of the objects being handled influence these factors. In other situations, the psychosocial factors at the workplace may contribute to WMSDs.
MSD cases are more severe than the average nonfatal injury or illness.

- In 2001, WMSDs involved a median of 8 days away from work compared with 6 days for all nonfatal injury and illness cases (e.g., hearing loss, occupational skin diseases such as dermatitis, eczema, or rash)
    - Three age groups (25–34 year olds, 35–44 year olds, and 45–54 year olds) accounted for 79% of cases2
    - More male than female workers were affected, as were more white, non-Hispanic workers
    - Operators, fabricators, and laborers; and persons in technical, sales, and administrative support occupations accounted for 58% of the WMSD cases
- Musculoskeletal disorders account for nearly 70 million physician office visits in the United States annually, and an estimated 130 million total health care encounters including outpatient, hospital, and emergency room visits
- In 1999, nearly 1 million people took time away from work to treat and recover from work-related musculoskeletal pain or impairment of function in the low back or upper extremities
- The Institute in Medicine estimates the economic burden of WMSDs as measured by compensation costs, lost wages, and lost productivity, are between $45 and $54 billion annually