

# Workplace Safety

## Works!

Sprain & Strain injuries are the leading type of workplace injury among CIRMA member employees. They can be prevented!



## Symptoms of Sprains

**Sprains** tend to have symptoms more localized to the injured **joint**. You may feel a tear or pop in the joint. Pain is usually immediate, and depending on the severity of the injury, it may not be possible to use the joint. Signs and symptoms of sprains include:

- pain,
- swelling,
- bruising,
- instability of the joint, and
- reduced range of motion.



Sprains & strains to the **back are the most common**. They may be prevented by using proper lifting and carrying techniques.

## Symptoms of Strains

**Strains**, whether acute or chronic, have symptoms localized to the injured **muscle groups or tendons**. Pain can be felt over a small or large area. Pain can be immediate in an acute strain, or it may be delayed in the case of an repetitive motion injury. Signs and symptoms of strains include:

- pain,
- inflammation,
- muscle spasm or cramping,
- muscle weakness, and
- bruising.

A fall is a common cause of a sprain & strain injury, often to the **knee, ankle, or wrist**. Wearing proper footwear and maintaining good walking surfaces help prevent these injuries.



**81% of overexertion injuries** to CIRMA member employees result from improper lifting, carrying, bending, reaching, pulling or pushing motions.



**Repetitive movements** are another cause of sprain/strain injuries. Ergonomically correct work practices will help prevent these chronic injuries.



## Prevention

Use good work practices.

Avoid awkward, static positions or working outside of optimal or neutral positions. Proper lifting practices and good posture significantly reduce the stresses placed on muscles and joints.

Stay in good physical condition.

Obesity, poor physical fitness, poor eating habits, and low agility increase the risk of sprain and strain injuries.

Rest when necessary.

Sprains and strains develop when fatigue outruns the body's recovery system.

Recognize signs and symptoms of injury.

Avoid making an injury worse: seek medical care when you experience pain or other signs and symptoms of a sprain or strain injury.

