

## RMI Starts Here

- Constant repeated movement — typing, twisting, squeezing, hammering, stapling
- Improperly designed tools, controls or work areas
- Forced pressure on muscles
- Awkward posture
- Lack of rest
- Repetitive lifting, stacking or loading
- Vibration
- Cold temperatures
- Pushing and pulling
- Some sports or recreational activities

## Symptoms Can Come and Go

- Pain in back, neck or wrist
- Weakness in grip strength
- Fatigue in hands or arms
- Numbness or tingling
- Stiffness in joints, hands

## Use a Keyboard?

RMIs have become more common with the growing use of computers. Keyboard-related wrist ailments, including carpal tunnel syndrome, account for about half of all repetitive motion disorders. **Keyboard quick tips:**

- 1 Sit in a comfortable position with your **arms at a 90-degree angle**. Adjust the keyboard height so that your shoulders can relax ... elbows at your sides, forearms parallel to the floor.
- 2 Keep your **hands and wrists straight**.
- 3 Use a **soft typing** touch.
- 4 **Stretch** your fingers and **relax** your hands as much as possible.



## Reducing Repetitive Motion Injuries

- 1 Evaluate ergonomics
- 2 Report discomfort early
- 3 Vary tasks when possible

## What Is Repetitive Motion Injury?

If you perform the same motions over and over on a daily basis, you're a candidate for repetitive motion injury (RMI). Left untreated, RMIs can develop into lifelong pain and disability.

**WHAT HAPPENS:** The soft tissues around a muscle tear when the muscle is overused due to repeated movement. At first, the damage may go relatively unnoticed. But as the muscle continues to work and those tears cannot heal, more strain occurs to the point of inflammation and RMI.

## Prevention Is in Your Hands

RMIs typically develop in the upper body, particularly the wrists, arms, hands and shoulders. **To prevent RMIs:**

- **Evaluate ergonomics.** A comfortable workstation that fits your body can help you stay in proper form to prevent strain.
- **Perfect your posture.** Keep your spine aligned in its natural curves. Keep your wrists straight.
- **Mix it up.** If you cannot change your tasks, vary the sequence of your activities.
- **Take breaks.** Stand and stretch or extend your arms to improve circulation.
- **Get a solid grip.** When using power tools, grip them with your entire hand.
- **Lessen the vibration.** Wear vibration-dampening work gloves when possible.
- **Report pain early.** Talk to your health care provider even if the pain seems to come and go.

**Remember:** Once damage is done, there may be no quick fix.

