

July Wellness Action Message

Quarterly Theme: Building Blocks for Sustainable Change

July Theme: Low Back Pain



Definition and importance

So, what exactly is musculoskeletal health? The World Health Organization (WHO) defines musculoskeletal health as the performance of the locomotive system, comprising intact muscles, bones, joints, and adjacent connective tissues. This system is an essential component of daily life. The simplest examples include walking, running, jumping, and so on. If it is not working properly, individuals may begin to experience pain, discomfort or develop chronic conditions.

Back/neck pain causes

Back and neck pain is very common among individuals in the corporate world. Often, those in these occupations spend quite a bit of time sitting – or lacking healthy amounts of daily movement. However, by paying attention to the causes, or risk factors of back/neck pain, we are better equipped to practice prevention methods or implement solutions.

What causes back/neck pain for corporate employees?

- Poor posture (The slouching of your shoulders, and back)
- Poorly positioned equipment (Computer, desk chair, etc.)
- Being sedentary (Inactive)
- Repetition (Repeating certain movements, especially those that twist or rotate your spine)
- Force (Lifting something heavy – more common in other occupations)

Prevention and solutions

Fortunately, there are various steps an individual can take to improve their musculoskeletal health and decrease pesky pain in their back, neck, or general muscles. There are preventative measures – those that you practice before pain begins, and solutions – those that you practice once the pain begins/persists.

Preventive measures:

- Exercise at least 150 minutes a week to maintain a healthy musculoskeletal system
- Prioritize a healthy diet to maintain strong muscles, bones, etc.
- Implement an ergonomic workstation
 - “Ergonomics is the study of people in the workplace and is the process in which workplaces, products, and systems are designed or rearranged to fit the individual using them.”
- Stand up, move from your station, and stretch often



If musculoskeletal pain has already begun (aching, sharp, stabbing, chronic pain),

- Limit excess movement to prevent further injury
- Apply heat or ice to the problem area
- Take over-the-counter medication (Ibuprofen, Tylenol)

However, if your pain persists after a few days/weeks, it is important to contact your doctor and seek medical help.

No matter if the pain is short-lived, and a pesky ache or it develops into a chronic condition – it can make concentrating or enjoying work extremely difficult. It is important to practice health-enhancing behaviors to prevent the onset of such pain. You only get one body, take care of it to the best of your ability!

Medica Insured Resources:

- **Omada for Joint and Muscle Health Virtual Health Option**

Learn more about a convenient, personalized approach to muscle and joint care Omada® for Joint & Muscle Health that combines personalized physical therapy with virtual technology. It's a proven program that can help build muscle, prevent pain, and treat existing aches and injuries. Members get effective musculoskeletal care, with access to a licensed physical therapist (PT), diagnosis, and treatment typically within 48 hours of enrollment.

[Omada for Joint and Muscle Health Overview](#)

[Omada MSK FAQ](#)

[Omada MSK video](#)

Note: Omada for Joint & Muscle Health is available to Medica members who: are at least 13 years old; are enrolled in a Medica Choice® Passport plan; and live in Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, or Wisconsin. Your out-of-pocket costs will depend on your plan benefits and the services you access through the program. There's no cost for the prevention program. For a PT consultation and the PT-guided recovery program, each will be covered as an office visit under your plan's physical therapy benefits and applicable copay, deductible, and/or coinsurance rates will apply.

- **My Health Rewards – Journeys self-guided courses related to back, muscle & joint health**

Reaching a personal health goal starts with a single step. Journeys® are daily, self-guided courses to help you build healthy habits. Living with back and joint pain can be a real challenge. Explore various related back, muscle and joint health strategies for easing pain. Small changes can often make a big difference. Go to the Health tab and click on Journeys. Complete a Journey each month and earn 250 points.

Back, Muscle & Joint Health



Beat Lower Back Pain
10 Days to Complete



Ease Arthritis Pain
10 Days to Complete



Move Better With Arthritis
14 Days to Complete



Repetitive Strain Injuries
13 Days to Complete