

Physical overload at work:

Organizational factor for workers with a *Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD)* – back pain

Interpretation:

Physical overload at work negatively influences return to work or sickness absence duration of workers with a MSD (back pain).

Proposed measurement tool (★):

Question about physical load at work (Reme et coll., 2009).

Intended Workers:

This tool was developed to assess workers with back pain only.

Caution:

This factor can only be evaluated by accredited professionals. Venturing into the evaluation of this factor is therefore prohibited. If you suspect that this factor may be involved, you must rely on the professionals in question. Self-administration or the administration of a questionnaire by an unqualified person may lead to undesirable consequences such as the calculation of erroneous scores and the misinterpretation of results that may result.

However, the elements (items or portion of interview) constituting this tool can provide additional information to other return to work actors or stakeholders, such as the actors from the organization (employer, human resources, supervisor, union representative, etc.). This allows for a better understanding of what the factor implies, which in turn can help to target some more specific elements or needs that would require (1) a possible intervention (using an accredited professional) or (2) adjustments of the organization, especially in terms of prevention.

Question about physical load at work

Do you work in positions involving constant strain to the back?

1. No/never ____
2. Very little ____
3. About $\frac{1}{4}$ of the time ____
4. About half the time ____
5. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time ____
6. Almost all the time ____

Scoring instructions

Not applicable.

Interpretation of scores

A higher score (4, 5 or 6) indicates physical overload at work, which has a negative impact on RT. Intervention is recommended if the score is 4, 5 or 6 (Reme et al., 2009).