

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 (★):

Non-validated questionnaire on physical overload at work – 3 items (Hansson et Hansson, 2000).

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.

Questionnaire on physical overload at work

For each statement, please use the scale below to indicate how well it describe your work as you would experience (or feel) it these days, given your current health condition.

1

High physical demands

2

Moderate physical demands

3

Rather low physical demands

4

Low physical demands

	High physical demands	Moderate physical demands	Rather low physical demands	Low physical demands
	1	2	3	4
1. Working in twisted positions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Working in the same position during a prolonged time.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Heavy lifts.	☐	☐	☐	☐

→ Final score (mean of 3 items): / 4 (possible range: 1 – 4)

Scoring instructions

To calculate the mean score of the questionnaire, sum the scores to the statements, then divide by 3 to get the mean. The final score can then vary between 1 and 4.

Interpretation of scores

A lower score indicates physical overload at work, which has a negative impact on return to work