



## Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



### Stretching Pros and Cons Safety Message

Strains, sprains, and tears are the most common types of workplace injuries every year. Outside of work, many people receive sprain and strain injuries while exercising, working on a project, or taking part in a hobby. These injuries can affect you for long periods of time once they occur and can be reinjured easily.

There are many safe work practices to avoid strains and sprains such as eliminating manual handling of objects or using the buddy system to complete a lift. Research has shown elimination and engineering controls are the best way to eliminate the hazards that cause strains and sprains on the job.

Stretching is also often considered a safeguard in preventing sprain and strain injuries on the job, but it should not be the primary safeguard in preventing injuries.

### A Few Benefits of Stretching According to the Mayo Clinic

- \* It is thought to help decrease the chance of activity-based injuries.
- \* It can help your flexibility which improves your range of motion for your joints.
- \* Improved flexibility also allows your muscles to work most effectively

### Safety Tips for Stretching

If you do choose to stretch, do so safely. It is not advised to stretch a cold muscle. Dr. Nicholas DiNubile, an orthopedic surgeon at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, advises to warm up with aerobic activity before jumping into stretching exercises. You should not feel pain when you are stretching. If you feel pain it probably means you are pushing your body too far. The National Academy of Sports Medicine advises moving into the stretch position until the first point of tension is felt in the muscle and hold for about 30 seconds to get the most benefit from a stretch.

Seek advice from your doctor if you want to begin a stretching routine, especially if it is for a muscle group that experienced a previous injury.