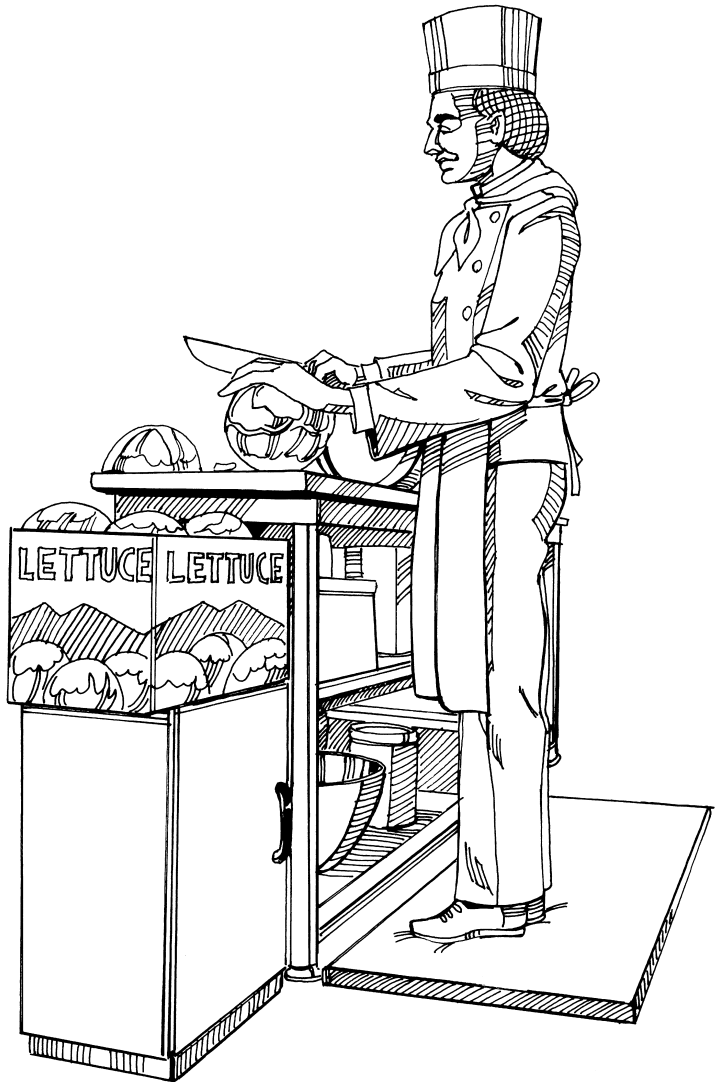


Cumulative Trauma Disorders

If your wrists ache, elbows throb or hands hurt from chopping vegetables, washing dishes, carrying trays, pouring drinks or performing other activities on the job, you may be using bad body mechanics that can cause injury. Cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs), also known as repetitive motion injuries, are physical problems that can develop over time.



Most Common CTDs

- ◆ **Carpal tunnel syndrome:** when a nerve in your wrist gets irritated from repeating the same motions over and over
- ◆ **Low back pain and tension neck syndrome:** when muscles and nerves get irritated by poor posture, sudden twisting or bending motions or improper lifting or carrying
- ◆ **Tendinitis:** when muscles and tendons in your elbows, forearms, wrists or hands get irritated
- ◆ **Bursitis:** when the area around your joints becomes irritated
- ◆ **Rotator cuff injury (shoulder tendinitis):** when one or more of the tendons in your shoulder becomes irritated, limiting shoulder movement

Preventing CTDs

- ◆ **Stand Tall**—Stand and sit with your ears, shoulders and hips “stacked” in a straight line.
- ◆ **Take Your Position**—Position yourself at your workstation so you can do less bending and reaching.
- ◆ **Set Up**—Position things so you can keep your wrists straight and do fewer repeated motions.
- ◆ **Give Me a Break**—Switch tasks or take regular breaks to stretch and shake out your hands.
- ◆ **Don’t Overdo It**—Use only the force or effort needed for a certain task.
- ◆ **Stay Fit**—Keep in shape through stretching, exercising, getting enough sleep, avoiding stress and eating right.

Controlling CTDs

Remember, the earlier you pay attention to a suspected CTD, the more likely you’ll be able to do something about it. If you suspect you have a CTD, try using ice packs and anti-inflammatory over-the-counter medications, such as aspirin or ibuprofen. If these don’t do the trick, consult with your doctor.