



Triaging the Injured Worker


**Work Conditioning-
Optimizing RTW**

By Vivienne Neerdaels,
OTR, CHT, CLT, COMT


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Work Conditioning Definition





Work conditioning is a therapy program that is designed to return impacted employees to work quickly and safely.

- Improve range of motion, strength, stability, and flexibility
- Improve mechanics
- Optimize physical and mental well-being
- Reduce fear of RTW
- Prevent reoccurrence or new injuries




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What it's not....






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When should work conditioning begin?



- When the worker is discharged from Occupational/Physical Therapy
- The worker no longer requires hands on treatment by therapist or modalities
- The worker continues to have restrictions that prevent them from returning to their prior job





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A better approach...

We start on day one of acute therapy. Why?

- Focus is always on RTW
- Establish goals that closely match critical job demands
- Goals are frequently revisited to keep worker & therapist focused on RTW







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Patient Specific Functional Scale


Activity	Score	Previous Score
Sliding coats out of vehicle	0	
Pushing/pulling/repositioning loads	0	
Threading needles/suturing	0	
Keyboarding/writing	4	
Vacuuming	5	
Squeezing cot lever to raise and lower with right hand	0	
Total Score:	1-5	

Score based on a 10 scale, where a score of 0 represents the inability to perform the activity and a score of 10 represents that the patient is able to perform activity at the same level as before the injury problem.

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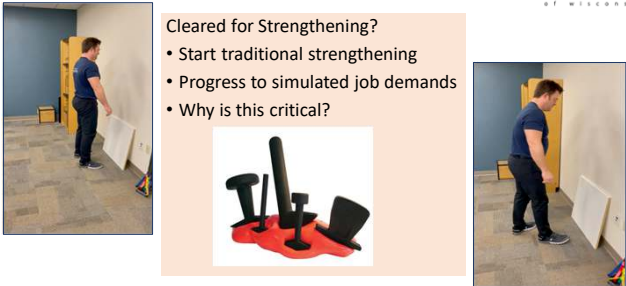
Acute Phase-



- Cleared for AROM
- Begin light functional tasks-nuts/bolts/coins/dice

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Acute Phase -

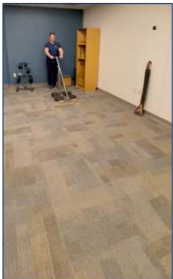


Cleared for Strengthening?

- Start traditional strengthening
- Progress to simulated job demands
- Why is this critical?

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Acute Phase -




Therapeutic Activity

- Graded tasks
- Hand span required
- Weight/distance/work positions/vision occluded?

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Transition to Work Conditioning




- Why not return worker to work accommodating restrictions?
- What about workers who will unlikely return to prior job?
- Scheduled for Work Conditioning Evaluation - 3 hrs

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Determine Critical Job Demands

- Gathered prior to start of work conditioning- employer and/or case manager can assist by providing details of physical demands of the job. If not, we can reference <https://onetonline.org>
- Job Analysis
- Heart Rate/BP



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Determine Frequency/Strength Level

Determining Their Frequency/Strength Level

1. First determine their frequency:

Jobs Analysis/Assessment
Occasional, (O): 0-33% of the day (e.g. 20 min/7h)
Frequent, (F): 34-66% of the day (e.g. 20-40 min/7h)
Continuous, (C): 67-100% of the day (e.g. 40-60 min/7h)


2. Use the frequency column and match this with the weight to determine their Strength Level.

Strength level	Duration of lifting or carrying			Percent of workday standing ^[1]
	Seldom	Occasionally	Frequently	
Sedentary work	Up to 10 pounds	Up to 10 pounds	Negligible weight ^[2]	Less than or equal to 1/3 ^[3]
Light work	11-25 pounds	11-25 pounds	1-10 pounds	
Medium work	26-50 pounds	26-50 pounds	11-25 pounds	1-10 pounds
Heavy work	51-100 pounds	51-100 pounds	26-50 pounds	11-25 pounds
Very heavy work	>100 pounds	>100 pounds	>50 pounds	>25 pounds

^[1] Standing estimates includes time spent standing, walking, and in low postures.
^[2] Negligible weight includes anything lifted or carried weighing less than 1 pound.
^[3] When the sedentary lifting or carrying requirements are met, and more than 1/3 of the workday is spent standing, light work is required.
 Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey.

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Job Analysis-



Jobs Analysis/Assessment
Occasional, (O): 0-33% of the day (e.g. 20 min/hr)
Frequent, (F): 34-66% of the day (e.g. 30-60 min/hr)
Continuous, (C): 67-100% of the day (e.g. 40-60 min/hr)

Job Analysis Table

Material Handling - Lifting	Frequency (O, F, C) and Actual Job Demands (lbs, ft, times)	Client Ability in this Evaluation	Jobs Demand Match % (Ability/GoalX100)
Floor to Waist Lift			
12" to Waist Lift			
Waist to Shoulder Lift			
Waist to Overhead Lift			
Unilateral Lift (patient-specific height)			



Non-Material Handling

Frequency (O, F, C) and Actual Job Demands (lbs, ft, times)	Client Ability in this Evaluation	Jobs Demand Match % (Ability/GoalX100)
Forward Reaching		
Above Shoulder Reach		
Bending (25% or more of full range)		
Squatting (50% or more of full range)		
Propulsive Tall Kneel		

O: 0 lbs, bend, or squat; F: 10 lbs, bend, or squat; C: 20 lbs, bend, or squat; Feet per second

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What does the job look like?

Sustained Position	Frequency (O, F, C) and Actual Job Demands (lbs, ft, times)	Client Ability in this Evaluation	Jobs Demand Match % (Ability/GoalX100)
Unilateral			
Bending			
Overhead Lift			
Twisting			

Cart and Push/Pull



Frequency (O, F, C) and Actual Job Demands (lbs, ft, times)	Client Ability in this Evaluation	Jobs Demand Match % (Ability/GoalX100)
Unilateral		
Bending		
Twisting		

Walking, Steair, Ladder

Frequency (O, F, C) and Actual Job Demands (lbs, ft, times)	Client Ability in this Evaluation	Jobs Demand Match % (Ability/GoalX100)
Walking (e.g. 100 yds, F: 100 yds, goal per day; C: 11 min, 100 yds)		
Steair (e.g. 10 steps, F: 10 steps, C: 10 steps)		
Ladder (e.g. 20 steps, F: 40 steps, C: 100 steps)		

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Correlation of work tasks & simulation

Frequency (O, F, C) and Actual Job Demands (lbs, ft, times)	Client Ability in this Evaluation	Jobs Demand Match % (Ability/GoalX100)
Fine-Gross Motor, Pinch, and Grip		
Fine Motor (Pincer, Pencil, holding Pick-up, or Pliers)		
Gross Motor (Box and Blocks)		
Engage (Box)		
Pinch (Box)		


O: 0 lbs, bend, or squat; F: 10 lbs, bend, or squat; C: 20 lbs, bend, or squat; Feet per second

Frequency (O, F, C) and Actual Job Demands (lbs, ft, times)	Client Ability in this Evaluation	Jobs Demand Match % (Ability/GoalX100)
Job Specific Tasks		

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Work Conditioning- Day 2


- Therapist creates a circuit
- Employee/employer may bring in specific objects
- Worker trained on specific tasks/circuit



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Work Conditioning Circuit

- Includes warm up- General flexibility and injury specific stretches
- Foundational strengthening including core/legs/arms
- Endurance specific activities to help with deconditioning- Air Bike, treadmill
- Work Specific Tasks
- Post work stretches



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Work Specific Circuit

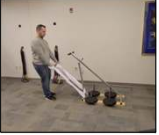

Paramedic:

Circuit #1

- Occasional 2-hand lift floor to waist and carry 100 lb x2 reps
- Occasional 2-hand lift floor to knees x2 reps
- Stand to knee 10 reps
- Walk in clinic with simulated med (med bag 20lb carry on shoulder (3 minutes))
- CPR simulation on BOW 2 minutes
- Climb ladder up/down 4 runs (45 reps)
- Drag 150-175lb sled using harness (300 ft)
- Driving simulation (sit on 18 with right foot up and use stool for steering wheel (3 min))
- Walk on treadmill at 2-5% incline (5 min)

Circuit #2



- Occasional 2-hand lift waist to shoulder x2 reps
- Occasional 2-hand lift above shoulder x2 reps
- Sheet pull, patient transfer simulation, right to left, and left to right (10 reps)
- Hook strap to push/pull sled. Pull sled to one side of clinic and return
- Step and up/down 36" platform (5 reps)
- CPR simulation on BOW (2 min)
- Cable (gym) pull down and pull up (5 reps each)

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Duration of Work Conditioning

- 3-5 x/week
- 4-8 weeks
- 2-6 hrs each session
- Weekly upgraded weights/resistance
- Special Considerations-Non-English speakers




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End of Healing.....



Consider Functional Capacity Evaluation

- Ergoscience – 1 day Functional Capacity Evaluation
- Determine more thorough job matching
- Assist in disability rating
- Assist in job accomodation



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Thank you!



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