



**Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WMSDs) are caused by using high force, repetitive movements, awkward postures, or too much vibration on the job.**

WMSDs can be painful, debilitating, and lead to lost work time.

In Washington, 40% of compensable workers' compensation claims are for a WMSD.

### Shoulder WMSD claims are more costly than other WMSD claims.

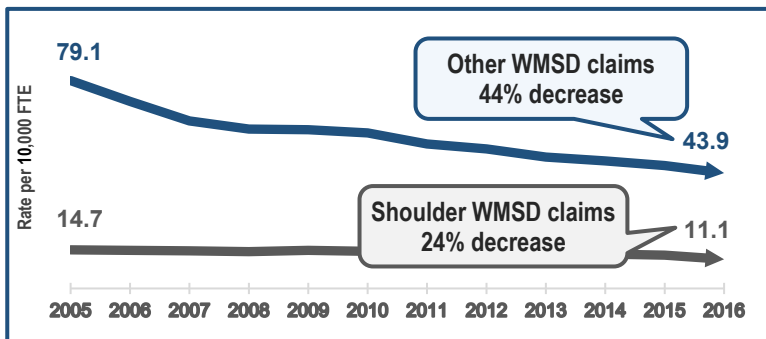
- Median claim cost was over \$28,000.
- Median lost work time was more than 4 months.

*Almost 3x more costly and 2.5x longer than other WMSD claims!*

### Types of work with high rates of shoulder WMSD claims:

- Solid Waste Collection
- Package Delivery
- Wholesale Distribution
- Firefighting and Law Enforcement
- Health Care
- Wallboard Installation

### Declines in shoulder WMSD rates are slower than expected.



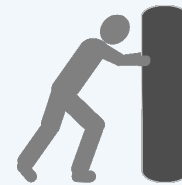
### Shoulder WMSD examples:

- Rotator Cuff Syndrome
- Tendinitis
- Joint pain
- Bursitis

### Three types of job activities caused over half of claims:



**Lifting**  
27%



**Pulling or Pushing**  
14%



**Holding, Carrying, Turning, or Wielding Objects**  
10%

**Shoulder WMSDs can develop over time. The intensity of a task, how long it takes, and how often it is done are important factors to consider when protecting workers from shoulder WMSDs.**

### Employers should:

- Provide mechanical means for workers to use when handling heavy objects, such as a cart or dolly, when possible.
- Make sure that workers always have a secure grip and keep objects close to the body when lifting or moving objects by hand.
- Encourage workers to report any tasks that cause pain or discomfort right away.
- Have an ergonomist or safety & health specialist evaluate demanding tasks. *L&I offers free consultations.*

▪ Data source: Washington State Department of Labor & Industries workers' compensation data, 2005–2016; compensable State Fund and self-insured claims included. Compensable claims involve wage replacement for lost work time (four or more days), total permanent disability, fatality, or a worker kept on salary by the employer during disability.  
 ▪ Claim costs and time loss days presented here are underestimates, costs and days are calculated based on what was paid as of August 2018 and are only available for State Fund claims. Costs include medical costs and wage replacement.  
 ▪ FTE= full time equivalent employee. 1 FTE=2,000 hours worked in a year.