

APPUNTI DI METODO

Protocollo di sorveglianza sanitaria di lavoratori esposti a movimenti ripetitivi dell'arto superiore

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KEY WORDS

Repetitive motions; upper limb; health surveillance; staging of disorders; legal reporting

SUMMARY

«A protocol for the health surveillance of workers exposed to repetitive movements of the upper limbs». **Background:** *Repetitive movements of the upper limbs at work can cause the onset of musculo-skeletal disorders and therefore an adequate planning of health surveillance is needed. A Work Group on this problem was constituted in Brescia, Italy, following the great interest raised by recent scientific meetings on this topic.* **Objectives:** *The aim of the Group was to prepare a proposal for a health surveillance protocol for the use of Occupational Health Physicians.* **Results:** *Health surveillance for the prevention of upper limb disorders must be based on the degree of risk. The risk assessment procedure should be based on the methodology currently available for ergonomic analysis and should also consider the frequency of upper limb disorders in the exposed workers. In case of moderate risk, it is necessary to identify hyper-susceptible individuals, in order to reduce exposure to repetitive movements by means of an adequate task fitness evaluation and suitable health education programmes. In situations of medium-to-high risk, a specific programme of health surveillance must be planned in order to identify early disorders and prevent the onset of more severe damage using task fitness evaluation and rehabilitation therapies. The appropriate diagnostic procedure is indicated for this purpose and a classification is proposed to divide the upper limb disorders into two stages, according to the clinical picture: a first acute-subacute stage, which is potentially reversible, and a chronic-subchronic stage, which is non-reversible. Legal reports are required according to the stage of the disease identified and must be supported by an adequate risk assessment.*

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