

PRACTICE CORRECT WORKING TECHNIQUE

Task Description:

Milking of dairy cows in tie stalls, parlour and rotary milking systems is physically demanding, associated with difficult working postures and movements, and strenuous and static muscle load. It is important to be prepared for the physically demanding work and in order to avoid musculoskeletal disorders - you need to be physically fit, well-trained and you need to know how to practice correct working techniques



Unsuitable working postures during milking in tie stalls, parlour and rotary milking systems

Comments from the employee:

- ❑ 'Milking is fun, but strenuous - how can I avoid ache and pain all over?'
- ❑ 'Many years of bad working postures has probably caused the muscle pain I experience today - I never learned about correct working postures or other approaches to avoid musculoskeletal problems'

MSD risks:

- ❑ Lifting of heavy equipment (7.5 kg) several times during milking in the tie stall
- ❑ Kneeling with a bended and twisted back several times during a milking shift
- ❑ Working with the arms above shoulder height
- ❑ Holding / attaching a milking cluster (weight of 1.6 to 2.5 kg) increases the load on the upper extremities
- ❑ The milker is exposed to a static muscle load for several hours

Exposed areas:

- ❑ Neck / Shoulder
- ❑ Arms / Elbows / Hands and Wrists
- ❑ Upper / Lower back
- ❑ Hips / Knees / Feet

Comments from the employer regarding practising correct working techniques:

- ❑ 'Unsuitable and difficult working postures are involved in the milking task. A lot can be solved by technical solutions, but use of correct working technique is very important'
- ❑ 'I want my milkers to be in good health - so I offer my milkers a season training card to the local gym'

Solutions and advices from the ergonomist:

- ❑ Keep your body in good trim by regular physical exercise!
- ❑ Do not use more muscle strength than the task requires!
- ❑ Warm up and stretch your muscles before, during and after the milking shift!
- ❑ Alternate work tasks with your colleagues and take short breaks - often!
- ❑ Work near your body, use both hands or alternate, and avoid extending your joints in outer positions!
- ❑ Lifting a load - tense your stomach muscles, bend your knees and hips, AND keep your back straight!
- ❑ Carrying a load - make sure that you divide the weight equally!
- ❑ Turning with a load - move your feet instead of twisting your back!



Work near the body and not with extended joints



Bend your knees, keep the back straight



Move the feet - do not twist the back



- ❑ Learn how to practice correct working techniques - Watch the instruction film 'Milk Right' (24 min). The film (no 42076) is in English, Polish, Lithuanian, Russian, Estonian and Swedish and available for purchase (200 SEK) on: <http://www.lrf.se/Bestall-material/Djur-/>

Photos: Christina Kolstrup, Sweden, 2008; 2009

