



BACK TO THE FIELD

Purpose

As professionals transition from non-physical office roles back into active field assignments, there is a significant risk of musculoskeletal injuries, particularly affecting the lower back, joints, and muscle groups. This is especially true for those of us who may have once been tough as nails on a job site but have since spent years behind a desk.

Why It Matters

- Many injuries occur in the first few days or weeks of returning to physical labor.
- The body adapts to less movement over time, this can lead to loss of flexibility, strength, and reaction speed.
- The “I used to do this with no problem” mindset can lead to strain, overexertion, or serious injury.

You are not 25 anymore. And that’s okay, but it means we need to prepare smarter.

Key Risks

- **Back strain** from lifting or bending incorrectly
- **Joint pain** from repetitive motions or poor posture
- **Pulled muscles** due to cold starts and tightness
- **Slips, trips, and falls** due to slower reaction times or misjudged footing

Preventive Measures

1. **Start Every Day with a Stretch**
 - Use our [Stretch & Flex Routine](http://www.iws.support) located in the Safety tab at www.iws.support before hitting the site.
 - This prepares your muscles and joints for movement and improves circulation.
2. **Ease Into Physical Work**
 - Don’t jump back into high-intensity tasks right away.
 - Focus on body mechanics. Lift with your legs, not your back.
3. **Know Your Limits**
 - If something feels wrong, stop and reassess.
 - Ask for help. The strongest leaders know when to use their team.
4. **Encourage Others**
 - If you’re in a field level leadership position, set the example by implementing a pre-shift stretching routine and make sure the short service workers pace themselves.
 - Share your story. Let others know it's smart to prepare, not weak.

Final Thought

Musculoskeletal injuries can sideline your contribution faster than you think. The transition from office to field is a critical time to listen to your body, prepare properly, and protect your long-term health.

Remember: The best leaders are the ones still standing tall at the end of the project. If we fail to prepare ourselves for the new routine, be prepared to fail at the new routine!