Karen Messing
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Needless pain and suffering from prolonged static standing: ergonomic, sociological and epidemiologic results.

Monday, 8 June, 2009
4:15 pm - 5:15 pm
Purvis Hall, 1020 Pine Ave. West, Room 25

ALL ARE WELCOME
- Refreshments to follow -
Abstract:

In the responses to the Québec Health and Social Survey of 1998, significant pain in the lower back and in the lower limbs was significantly associated with a standing posture during most of the work day. Prolonged standing is also associated with biological changes that vary with the details of the posture (e.g., mobility) and was usually found among low-revenue workers exposed to other hazardous working conditions. Many more people in Québec are exposed to this working condition in North America than on other continents, where chairs are commonly provided to service workers in such jobs as bank teller and supermarket checkout clerk. Exploration of the determinants and effects of prolonged standing at the CINBIOSE research centre results in the following messages for epidemiologists and occupational health professionals: (1) the same name for a working condition may not correspond to the same working condition in different working populations; (2) it is not sufficient, in diverse populations, to adjust for demographic characteristics (e.g., gender) and check for interactions with them in the final logistic regression model – stratification is necessary; (3) information from ergonomic, biological, social and epidemiologic studies can be usefully combined and that from each field can be used to generate research questions in the other fields; (4) exposure to prolonged standing in North America should be diminished at least to the levels prevalent on other continents.

Selected references


Ngomo, S., Messing, K., Perreault, H., Comtois, A. 2008 Orthostatic symptoms, blood pressure and working postures of factory and service workers over an observed work day. Applied Ergonomics 39(6): 729-736


Bio:

Karen Messing chairs the Gender and Work Technical Committee of the International Ergonomics Association. A retired professor of ergonomics, she continues to do research on applications of gender-sensitive analysis in occupational health and constraints and demands of work in the service sector, especially prolonged static standing. Dr. Messing is active in a research partnership with three Québec unions oriented towards improvement of women’s occupational health, supported by the Fonds québécois de recherche sur la société et la culture. She is the author of over 110 peer-reviewed articles, of One-eyed Science: Occupational Health and Working Women, and (with Östlin) of the World Health Organization’s 2006 Gender Equality, Work and Health : A Review Of The Evidence.

June

15 June 2009
Whitney Robinson, RWJ Health & Society Scholar Epidemiology, University of Michigan
Topic: TBA

22 June 2009
J. Corbett McDonald, Emeritus Professor, Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics & Occupational Health, McGill University and Nicola Cherry, Professor, Department of Medicine/Environmental and Occupational Health, Epidemiology, University of Alberta.
Topic: Epidemiological surveys of water borne arsenic in Bangladesh