

MUSCULO-SKELETAL ISSUES IN THE WORKPLACE

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MSDs are a leading cause of disability, now extending beyond physical labor to include inflammatory and immune-related disorders.

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Start with education, integrate workplace programs, and empower employees to take charge of their metabolic health.



INTRODUCTION

Musculoskeletal conditions are the leading contributor to disability worldwide.[1] According to US Department of Labor Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), “Work-related MSDs (Musculoskeletal Disorders) are among the most frequently reported causes of lost or restricted work time.”[2]

Historically we have associated MSDs only with physically hard labor work, such as injuries from lifting heavy objects or repetitive motion injuries from certain specific tasks. Today, there is a new category of “other” MSDs beyond the traditional five disease categories of rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, low back pain, neck pain, and gout.[3] These “others” include inflammatory polyarthropathies, immune dysfunctions, disorders of the synovium and tendons systemic connective tissue disorders and the list goes on.

Knowing the expansion and growth of MSD’s is paramount to structuring an employee wellness program that encompasses this new broader definition of MSDs. There is ample science now demonstrating that improved metabolic health supports overall reduction of chronic disease prevalence,[4] supports better immune function[5] and can help reduce inflammation markers,[6] all potentially impacting MSDs in the workplace.



WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR EMPLOYERS?

First is for companies and leaders to understand the commonality of poor metabolic health, inflammation and how this impacts musculoskeletal health.[1] Dr. Howard Luks, orthopedic surgeon and sports medicine specialist says it well here.[2]

“As we continue to understand the intricate relationship between metabolic and musculoskeletal health, it becomes increasingly clear that a holistic approach to wellness is not just beneficial but essential.”

Essential being the key word. Employee wellness programs that lack education and empowerment tools in the area of metabolic health are missing out on addressing the root cause and negative impact MSD's could have on their bottom line. We'll explore ways to integrate metabolic health initiatives in the “How to get started section”.

Second point is that disability numbers and excess mortalities continue to rise and not just among the 65+ population, younger workers as well. Wall Street Analyst Ed Dowd's company Phinance Technologies has been observing and reporting on these trends recently. See one of his observation analyses points below and other reports from his company.[1]

“At the population level, we found that there is strong correlation between the increase in disability rates and the rise in excess mortality, in both older (65+) and younger individuals (16–64), starting 2/2021 and extending to 11/2022.”

Third point, is if not now when? Employee health and job performance go hand in hand. Current medical and insurance-based models of worksite wellness have not moved the needle in health. If your company has an employee wellness program that is not addressing the root causes of MSD's, inflammation and metabolic health, is it worth your money? From a business perspective proper allocation of your resources in addressing root causes is a better investment than a band aid on the problem.



BRIEF OVERVIEW ON METABOLIC HEALTH

The five official markers of metabolic health are waist circumference, blood pressure, fasting blood glucose, Triglycerides and HDL cholesterol.[1] Depending on which organization you cite, having 2 or 3 of these markers in a non-healthy range you are considered to have Metabolic Syndrome. As a reference only 12% of US Adults are cardio-metabolically healthy.[2]

Additional research in the metabolic health area is whether an individual is insulin sensitive, meaning insulin is functioning properly or the opposite insulin resistant. This metabolic marker along with others helps assess one's risk for inflammation, chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardio-vascular health and other health issues.[3] Fasting insulin is generally not part of a standard lipid panel but should be if targeting root causes of chronic and metabolic disease.

HOW TO GET STARTED?

01

Education is the first step.

The conversation on metabolic health has begun on a national level spurred on by the Make America Healthy Again movement. Individuals and organizations are calling for more transparency, information and tools to combat our chronic disease epidemic and educate individuals on the importance of having good metabolic health and its' corresponding impact on mental health, MSD's and mortality.



02

Integration is step two.

Finding a provider who can bring metabolic health programs into your workplace at the level appropriate for your company. This could initially start with one small group, think leadership team, sales or marketing squad or just a highly motivated selection of employees. Incorporating some form of group metabolic education along with one-on-one individual coaching is ideal. Group programs provide the comradery and accountability aspects while the individual coaching allows for personalized attention to lifestyle change. Once a small group is on board this could move into a companywide comprehensive metabolic health program.

03

Empowerment is phase three.

When individuals have the tools to better understand their metabolic health, they are more equipped to take charge of their health. Our current medical system has historically been a top-down approach, much as in traditional business endeavors. A more modern-day tactic is empowering your team with the skills, knowledge and ability to think critically, be active in their health management and thus be empowered to want to improve their metabolic health status.

IF NOT NOW WHEN?

As a nation we are not getting any healthier, this is a huge financial and productivity burden on company performance. One can choose to sit on the sidelines and “hope” for things to change. Or you can be a leader in the movement and start today in making metabolic health a priority. Whether your goal is to improve MSD’s in the workplace, enhance mental health parameters or augment the overall health of your employees, good metabolic health is the foundational step in achieving these goals.



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OUR TEAM



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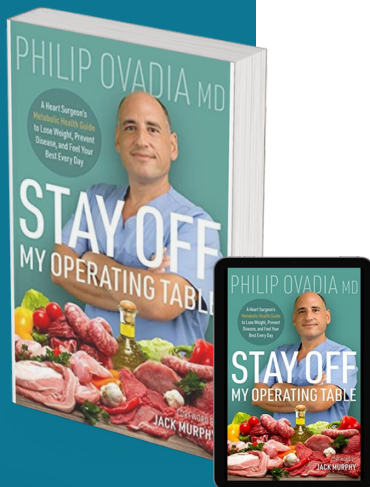
Ms. Hanks holds a MS in Kinesiology from Indiana University and an MBA from the University of San Francisco. She is a certified Metabolic Health Practitioner, Nutrition Network Coach Practitioner™ with decades of experience as a worksite wellness consultant and executive coach. Currently Krisna is Director of Employee Wellness and Metabolic Health Coach with Dr. Philip Ovadia and the I Fix Hearts Team. Her background combines years as a professional dancer in Europe and USA, certified worksite wellness advisor, Diabetes Prevention Specialist, Senior Fitness and certified Classical Pilates instructor.



Dr. Philip Ovadia

Board-certified Cardiac Surgeon and founder of Ovadia Heart Health

Our mission is to optimize the public's metabolic health and help people like you stay off my operating table. As a heart surgeon who used to be morbidly obese, I have seen firsthand the failures of mainstream diets and medicine. I realized that what helped me lose over 100 pounds was the same solution that could have prevented thousands of open heart surgeries I've performed — metabolic health. Through Ovadia Heart Health, I teach individuals and organizations my complete metabolic health system to prevent and reverse disease, avoid early death, and live well for life.



Next Steps: Your heart's health is too important to leave in the hands of someone who doesn't fully support your wellness journey.

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