**WEIGAND**
CONSTRUCTION

Sprains and Strains

Sprains and strains are among the most common workplace injuries. They are painful and debilitating for employees and costly for employers. What are these ailments all about and are you doing enough to help prevent them?

- A sprain is an injury involving the stretching or tearing of a ligament (a tissue that connects bone to bone) or a joint capsule, which helps provide joint stability. Symptoms can include pain, inflammation, and, sometimes, the inability to move an affected limb. Sprains occur when a joint is forced beyond its normal range of motion, such as when one turns or rolls the ankle.
- A strain is an injury that involves the stretching or tearing of a musculo-tendinous (muscle and tendon) structure. An acute strain of a musculo-tendinous structure occurs at the junction where the muscle is becoming a tendon. This happens when a muscle is stretched and suddenly contracts, as with running or jumping. Symptoms of an acute muscle strain can include pain, muscle spasm, loss of strength, and limited range of motion. Chronic strains are injuries that gradually build up from overuse or repetitive stress, resulting in tendinitis (inflammation of a tendon).
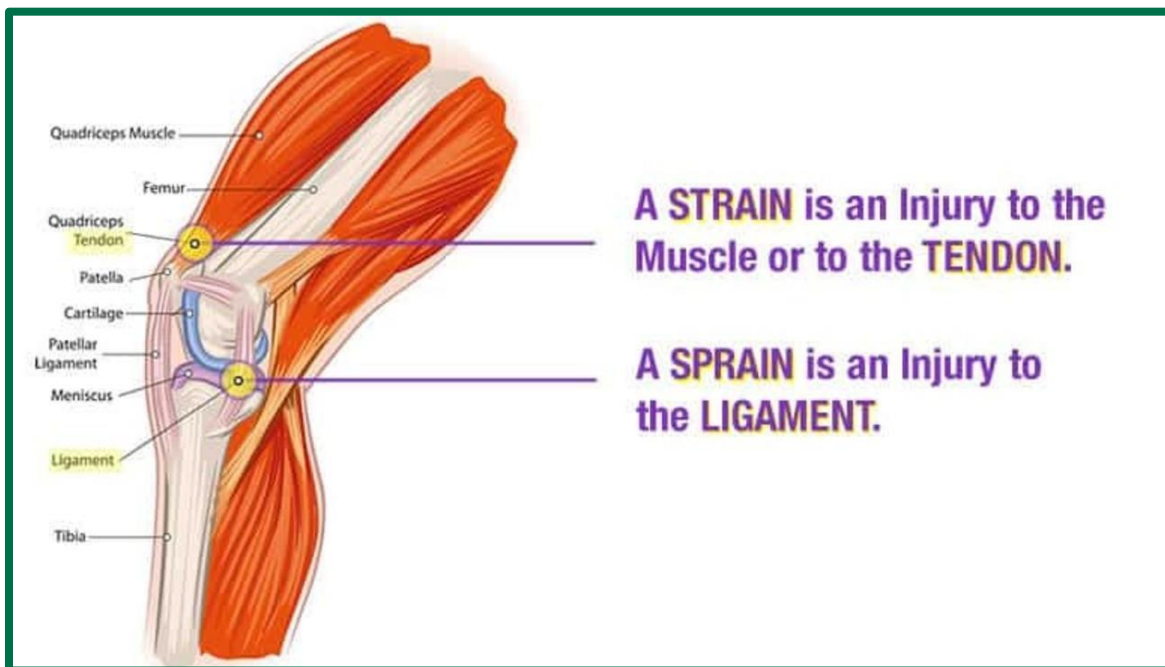
The following tips can help prevent the discomfort and expense associated with these too-common injuries.
- Size up the job before starting. What is the best, safest way to proceed?
- Be alert to any way to reduce or eliminate lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, and carrying.
- Warm up the muscles before beginning a strenuous job, just like athletes do.
- Watch out for slip or trip hazards in the work area.
- When possible, push, rather than pull.
- Ask for help when a load is heavy, awkward, or unstable.
- Be sure that you are on a stable surface before attempting any lift.
- Keep the load close and bend with the knees, not the back.
- Use a step stool or ladder, on a stable surface, whenever called for.
- Avoid twisting while handling a load.
- Stay in good physical shape through regular exercise.