

The OccMed Colorado Connection

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Meet the Staff

In each issue of The OccMed Colorado Connection, we introduce you to a member of our professional staff. In this issue, meet Dr. Jeff Raschbacher.



John J. “Jeff” Raschbacher, M.D., is a founding partner of OccMed Colorado. He is certified by the American Board of Family Practice and holds Level II full accreditation from the Division of Workers’ Compensation.

Dr. Raschbacher received his bachelor’s degree from the University of Colorado at Boulder and his doctor of medicine degree from the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. He completed an internship in family practice at Western Medical Center in Santa Ana, Calif., and Los Angeles County USC Medical Center. He completed a residency in family practice through the University of California/San Francisco at Community Hospital of Santa Rosa. He has also completed master’s level courses in epidemiology, biostatistics, health services administration and environmental health.

Dr. Raschbacher said it was by accident that he came to work in occupational health. “It

found me,” he said. “I was recruited to work at a new clinic when I lived in California. I found that I really enjoyed practicing occupational medicine and had an acute attraction to musculoskeletal care.” He also has an interest in the legal issues that his chosen field presents and has become OccMed Colorado’s resident expert.

Dr. Raschbacher serves on Colorado’s Division Independent Medical Exams (DIME) panel, a group whose opinion carries weight in regard to the settlement of workplace injury cases. In his free time, Dr. Raschbacher is president of the local chapter of Children’s International Summer Villages (CISV), an organization that evolved from the belief that lasting peace is possible if individuals and groups can learn to live together as friends, starting with children and youth. He is also an avid skier of all varieties—cross country, telemark, back country and downhill.



Jeff Raschbacher, M.D.

Recording Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that certain businesses record work-related injuries and illnesses. The *Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses* (Form 300) is used to classify these injuries and illnesses and to track the extent and severity of each case. Cases recorded on the log are not necessarily eligible for workers’ compensation or other insurance benefits, and being listed does not mean that the employer or

worker was at fault, or that an OSHA standard was violated. To follow are just a few of the definitions OSHA provides to guide you as you record and classify cases on your log.



When is an injury or illness considered work-related?

When an event or exposure in the work environment caused or contributed to the

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Work Place Safety *By Lisa Wilson, OTR*

Has anybody ever told you, you should lift with your legs and not with your back? Many workers have participated in some form of education regarding proper body mechanics, such as this, for work tasks. While education is valuable, injury prevention in the work place is much more complex than just learning how to improve one's body mechanics. Studies have shown that the most successful work safety programs address at least three key areas: ergonomics, training and fitness.



Ergonomics is the applied science of maximizing productivity by minimizing fatigue and discomfort in the workplace. This involves careful analysis of the employee and his work environment. The goal is to adapt the environment to fit the employee. For instance, using a hammer with a bend in the handle may help a carpenter maintain a neutral wrist position. This would reduce his risk of developing cumulative trauma to his wrist. Likewise, an office worker may minimize the strain on her neck simply by raising or lowering her computer monitor to eye-level. The idea is to change the work environment before it changes the worker.

Providing ongoing training to workers about work place safety is another vital ingredient for a successful safety program. Employees need to be educated regarding proper posture and body mechanics for their specific work tasks. They should understand how to sit, stand, walk, lift, push, pull, and carry. Whether they sit at a desk or operate heavy machinery, workers need to be taught proper warm-up and stretching techniques that will help them do their jobs more effectively and safely.

Finally, employee fitness contributes to a winning safety record. Employees should be encouraged to participate in a conditioning program. Some companies do this by partnering with a nearby fitness club or community center to offer a membership deal. Others offer onsite fitness classes or facilities. Be creative. If a worker maintains a strong level of strength and endurance, she will be better equipped to tolerate job demands.

Try implementing these three strategies and watch your employee safety record improve. In addition, enjoy improved morale as workers learn that their employers truly care about their health and safety.

In Good Company

In each issue of The OccMed Colorado Connection, we profile one of our client companies or a pet project in which we are involved. In this issue, we spotlight Total Longterm Care.



It comes as no surprise that a growing segment of our population is aging. The baby boomers are entering their 60s in increasing numbers and are demanding services to accommodate their changing needs. Total Longterm Care's mission is to *enable frail individuals to live with dignity in their communities*. The organization offers adult day centers, primary and specialist care, home care services, end of life care, hospital care and transportation services.

"While all of our clients are eligible to live in nursing homes, we provide an alternative



that allows them to stay in their own homes." said Kathy Ginsburg, Employee Relations Manager for Total Longterm Care. It is widely believed that a person's quality of life is higher when he or she can remain at home.

With approximately 600 employees in metro Denver, Total Longterm Care chose OccMed

Colorado as its occupational health provider for several reasons. "We were attracted to OccMed Colorado's personable approach," said Ginsburg. "We appreciate the direct lines of communication they offer. Plus, their clinics are located in close proximity to the majority of our employees and their pricing is reasonable."

For more information about Total Longterm Care, visit www.totallongtermcare.org. For more information about OccMed Colorado, visit www.occmedcolorado.com or call 303-341-1799.

Workers' Comp Quiz

When it comes to workers' comp, do you think you know it all? Challenge your knowledge with our quiz!

1. If an employee is hurt while voluntarily playing in an extracurricular, company-sponsored softball game, is he covered by the Workers' Compensation Act?
2. Are employees who are in the U.S. illegally covered under the Workers' Compensation Act?
3. How long do you have to accept or reject a workers' comp claim?
4. If a worker is injured while working in a home office, is it covered by workers' comp?
5. According to the Workers' Compensation Act, what is the age of a minor?

Answers: 1. No; 2. Yes; 3. 20 days after notice or knowledge; 4. Yes, if he was conducting business when the injury occurred; 5. Anyone under the age of 21.

OccMed Trivia

In 2002, there were six industries that recorded 100,000 or more cases of occupational injuries. They included hospitals, eating and drinking places, nursing and personal care facilities, grocery stores, department stores and trucking and courier services (except air). (Source: *Monthly Labor Review*, Jan. 25, 2005)



Recording Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses

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condition or significantly aggravated a preexisting condition. Work-relatedness is presumed for injuries and illnesses resulting from events or exposures occurring in the workplace, unless an exception specifically applies.

Which work-related injuries and illnesses should you record?

Record those that result in death, loss of consciousness, days away from work, restricted work activity or job transfer, or medical treatment beyond first aid. You must also record any significant work-related injury or illness that is diagnosed by a physician or other licensed health care professional. Work-related cases involving cancer, chronic irreversible disease, a fractured or cracked bone, or a punctured eardrum must be logged in addition to those that meet any additional criteria listed below.

What are the additional criteria?

You must record the following conditions when they are work-related: any needle-stick injury or cut from a sharp object that is con-

taminated with another person's blood or other potentially infectious material; when employee is medically removed under the requirements of an OSHA health standard; tuberculosis infection as evidenced by a positive skin test or diagnosis by a physician or licensed health care professional after exposure to a known case of active tuberculosis; or when an employee's hearing test reveals that 1) the employee has experienced a Standard Threshold Shift (STS) in hearing in one or both ears and 2) the employee's total hearing level is 25 decibels or more above audiometric zero in the same ear(s) as the STS.

What is medical treatment?

Medical treatment includes managing and caring for a patient for the purpose of combating disease or disorder. The following are NOT considered medical treatments and are not recordable: visits to a physician or health care professional solely for observation or counseling; diagnostic procedures; and any procedure that can be labeled "first aid."



For more details or further information, visit OSHA online at www.osha.gov.



Occupational Medicine
and Musculoskeletal Care

P.O. Box 31129
Aurora, CO 80041

Inside!

Read Dr. Jeff Raschbacher's
column from the *Denver
Business Journal*

Tips from the Pros — Reduce Eyestrain Caused by Computer Usage

Eye muscles that are held in one position too long are apt to become strained. Many of us are not even aware of how hard our eyes are



working as we stare at our computers, often for hours at a time. A few simple tips can help us keep our eyes healthy. First, turn up the contrast on your monitor. Second, if overhead lighting is too bright or causes excessive glare, turn it off and use a soft bulb lamp. Third, periodically look away

from your monitor and focus on a distant object. Finally, close your eyes for a few seconds every hour to relax your visual system.

(Source: Lisa Wilson, OTR, OccMed Colorado)

Three Convenient Locations

Aurora

3449 Chambers Rd., Suite B
(Just south of I-70 on Chambers)
720-859-6139

Denver

2425 S. Colorado Blvd., Suite 100
(Just north of Colorado and Yale)
303-757-2141

Thornton

550 E. Thornton Pkwy., Suite 110
(SW corner of Thornton Pkwy and Washington
in the Pinnacle Shopping Center)
720-872-0399



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www.occmedcolorado.com