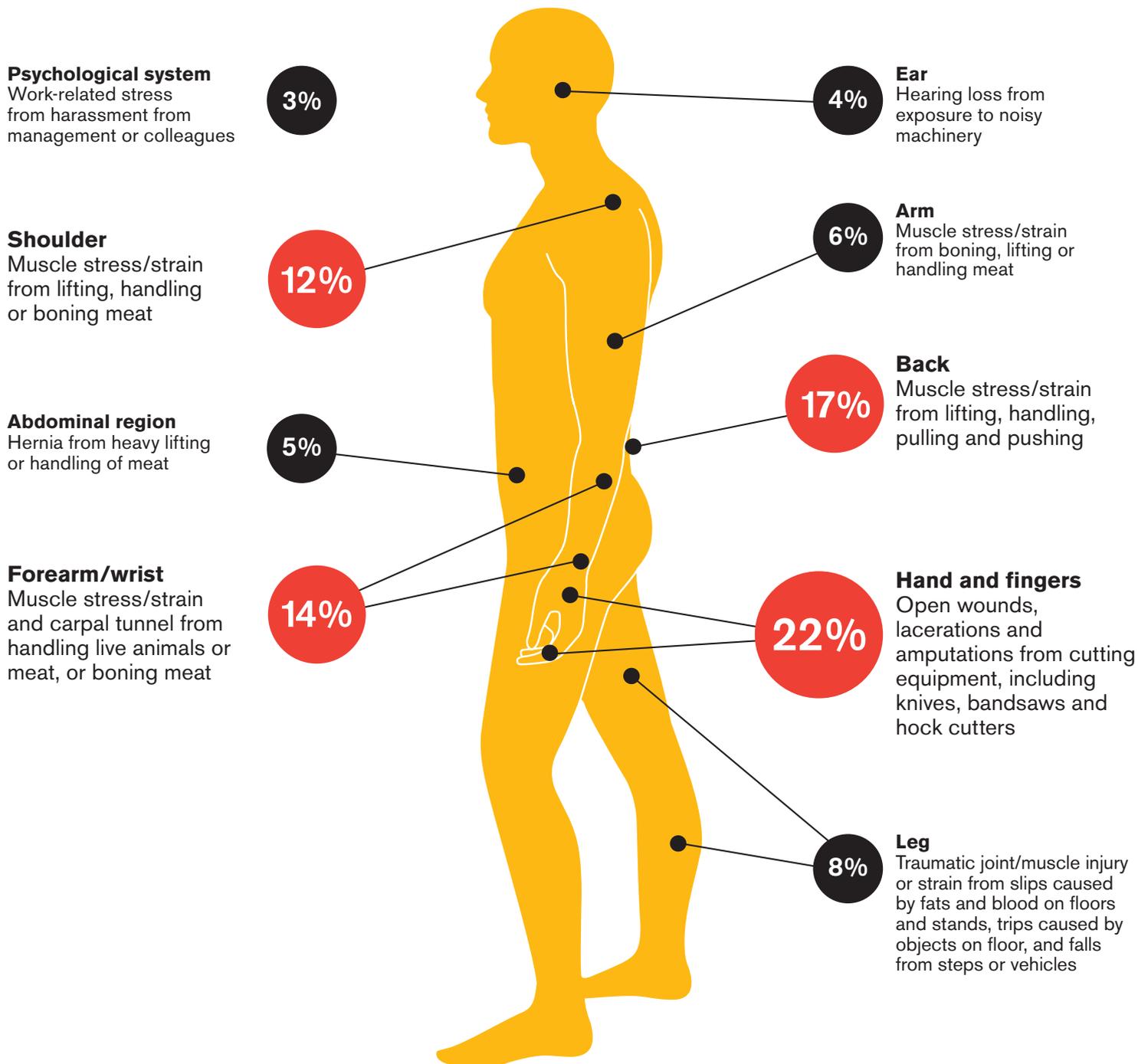


Injury Hotspots

Meat Industry

These are the most common injuries and hazards for people working in the meat industry, as shown by injury claims.



See over the page for some safety solutions.

Safety solutions

WorkSafe expects employers to have safety solutions in place to protect workers from injury and illness. Below are some common solutions known to reduce the risk of injury and illness; employers should work together with their employees and health and safety representatives to determine the most effective OHS solutions for their workplace.

Hotspots	Solutions
Lifting and handling	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shoulder ● Forearm/wrist ● Back ● Abdomen ● Arm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure work is done between shoulder and knee, by raising or lowering the worker (e.g. by using height-adjustable work platforms or stands) or by raising or lowering the work (e.g. by using height-adjustable conveyors or tables). • There is no need to bend when pushing or lifting tubs. • Transfer offal tubs by dolly or trolley and empty by mechanical means (e.g. tipping chutes). • Eliminate carrying of carcasses by hand, e.g. by boxing and palletising meat; by using chain and hook systems. • Use plate freezers or trolley systems for loading and unloading freezer frames or ensure loading/unloading is done between the shoulders and knees (e.g. use height adjustable racking and trolleys, pallet lift tables or vacuum lifters). • Use forklift slipsheets with pre-palletising and forklift push-pull attachments when stacking shipping containers. • If meat lumping is unavoidable (e.g. transporting from a vehicle into retailer), a linkage rail system should be used.
Breaking down (butchering, boning and cutting)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shoulder ● Forearm/wrist ● Back ● Arm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use mechanical aids, such as meat tensioners, or ensure workstations are height-adjustable so that boning is done between the shoulders and waist. • Chain mesh aprons should be worn whenever boning. • Use hooks (always carried in tubs) to pull apart the meat. • Ensure carcass temperatures support the smoothest possible cutting, particularly for hard beef. • Use engineering design for safety barriers, guards or mechanical feeding to minimise the likelihood of injuries caused by blades or cutters. Use height adjustable guard on bandsaws, two-handed operation for hock and brisket cutters, and install feed-in systems to bandsaws.
Knives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hand and fingers ● Arm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide mechanical sharpening systems. • All people using knives on the kill floor must wear hand protection (on one or both hands) to prevent lacerations and support good grip (e.g. rubber over kevlar gloves). • Use a chain mesh apron and arm guard when using a knife for slaughtering, slicing or boning. • Workers should receive competency-based training in selection, use and sharpening of knives.
Slips, trips and falls	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leg ● Arm ● Head 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both floor surfaces and footwear should be non-slip. • A clear 'cleandown' procedure (including the swift removal of blood, fats and residues, including in evisceration and sticking areas) should be followed during work, not just at the end of shift. • While cleaning, workers should wear Personal Protective Equipment (P.P.E.), including protection against scalding.
Noise	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that employees are not exposed to noise that exceeds the national exposure standard. • This can be achieved by eliminating the source of the noise or, if that is not reasonably practicable, using quieter plant or processes or engineering controls (e.g. enclosure). • If these aren't practicable, use administrative controls (e.g. provide hearing protection).
Bullying and harassment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Psychological system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that policies and procedures on bullying, harassment and work pressure are understood and followed by all staff. This includes procedures for reporting and resolving incidents.
Zoonoses	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure people are protected from zoonotic diseases by methods such as dust minimisation programs, effective ventilation, prompt disposal of waste and reproductive products, P.P.E. and vaccination (e.g. for Q fever).

Employers must consult with workers prior to making any changes that may affect their occupational health and safety. If someone suffers a work-related injury or illness, their employer has duties under the Accident Compensation Act, one of which is to ensure their safe return to work.

Your health and safety contact is:

worksafe.vic.gov.au/hotspots

WorkSafe Advisory Service
Toll-free 1800 136 089

WorkSafe Victoria is a trading name of the Victorian WorkCover Authority

