



## Working in temporary employment and exposure to musculoskeletal constraints

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Résumé en  
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**BACKGROUND:** In recent years, temporary work (TW) has increased in European countries due to the greater uncertainty in the economy. **AIMS:** To compare the prevalence of non-specific musculoskeletal symptoms of the upper extremities (UEMSDs) and their main risk factors in blue-collar workers employed through temporary agencies (TW) and in those in permanent employment (PE). **METHODS:** UEMSDs occurring during the preceding 7 days were assessed using a Nordic questionnaire completed by 1493 blue-collar workers randomly included in a surveillance programme for UEMSDs (171 in TW and 1322 in PE) in a large French region. Personal factors and work-related risk factors for UEMSDs were assessed by self-administered questionnaires. **RESULTS:** The prevalence of UEMSDs during the preceding 7 days did not significantly differ between workers in TW or PE. However, after adjustment for age and gender, TW had a higher risk of symptoms of the wrist/hand region (OR = 1.6, 95% CI 1.04-2.6). TW was characterized by higher exposure to paced work (OR = 2.0, 95% CI 1.4-3.0), repetitive work (OR = 2.3, 95% CI 1.6-3.4), awkward postures of the wrist (OR = 1.6, 95% CI 1.2-2.4) and intensive use of vibrating hand tools (OR = 1.7, 95% CI 1.1-2.3). Workers in TW suffered from a lack of autonomy (OR = 2.5, 95% CI 1.7-3.6) and skill discretion at work (OR = 2.0, 95% CI 1.3-3.1) more frequently, but there was no difference in relation to psychological demands of the task or social support. **CONCLUSIONS:** Temporary workers were more frequently exposed to working time constraints, repetitive work and biomechanical constraints of the wrist/hand region when compared to permanent workers and may represent a subpopulation at particularly high risk of UEMSDs.

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