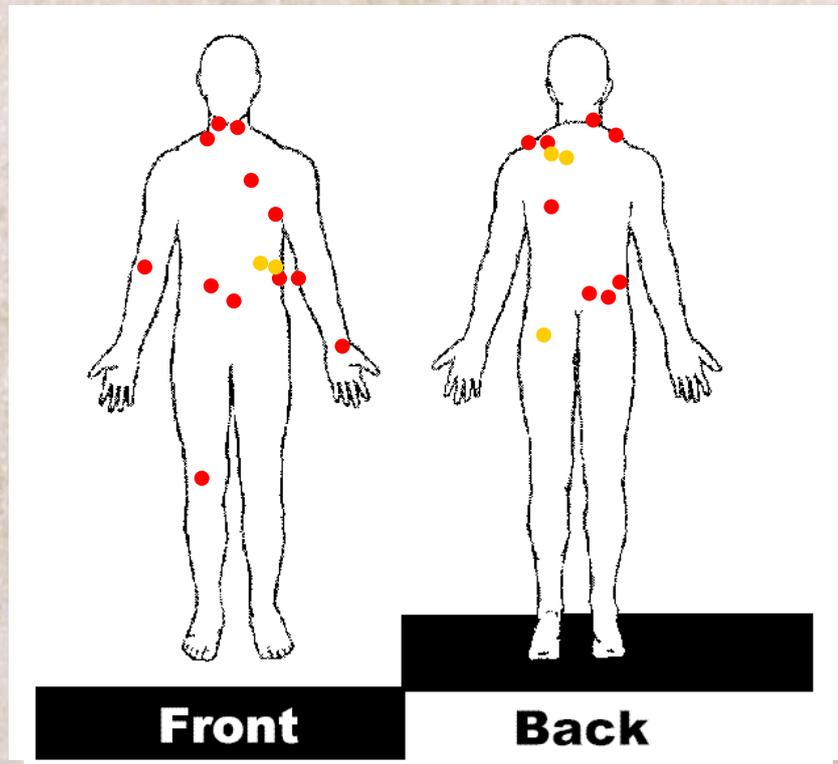


Body Mapping





TSSA believes that everyone has the right to work in a safe environment that does not jeopardise their personal health and safety now or in the future.

TSSA is committed to taking on and challenging employers who fall short in providing such working conditions.

Where members suffer injury or ill-health as a result of negligence, TSSA provides access to professional legal advice to help recover damages.

TSSA Health & Safety Reps are at the forefront of delivering this message.



What is Body Mapping

One of the key roles of TSSA Health and Safety reps, covered by the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations, is the investigation of potential hazards. This includes talking to members to identify and raise concerns on their behalf.

Establishing the link between members health and the work they carry out can often be difficult.

Members often blame symptoms on getting older and /or being unfit and are often unaware that their colleagues are suffering the same. Some symptoms are seen as been part of the job without realising that safer and easier ways of working can be developed.

The most common work related health issues are stress and musculo-skeletal disorders. These can relate to issues outside of the workplace and it is often difficult separating the effects of work from the effects of life in general.

Body mapping is a technique that has primarily been developed by union Health and Safety Reps to get members talking about how work effects their health and wellbeing.

Body mapping results assist Health and Safety reps in identifying common problems and their causes. By engaging members in body mapping, Health and Safety reps can work with them to look into possible solutions.

Finding Out Where It Hurts

The body mapping principal is very straight forward.

Using a chart showing a front and back view of a body, workers doing the same or similar tasks, are asked to mark on the chart where they suffer pain, discomfort or injury.

Different coloured marks [pens, stickers, pins etc] are used to identify each of the different problems.

For example:

- Red  = aches and pains
- Blue  = cuts and bruises
- Green  = illnesses [skin irritation, stomach upsets, etc]
- Yellow  = other issues

Body mapping works better if it is carried out in a group. If this is not possible members should be given their own chart and asked to fill in and return.

One of the advantages of carrying out the exercise as a group is that it gets workers talking to each other. As a group they will be quick to identify common issues and will often start to work together on solutions.

Principals of Body Mapping

No matter how you choose to conduct a body mapping exercise, either on one large chart or as individuals, it is important to remember the following key principals;

- The study is amongst workers doing the same or very similar roles.
- Encourage as many people as possible to take part.
- Get people to talk to each other about their experiences.
- Make a note of the causes behind the injury or pain
- Ask the group to give thought and discuss ways the injury/pain could be avoided.

The Body Map

Once the body mapping exercise is complete it should be possible to identify areas of concern. If using one chart for everyone, it is quite common for clusters to appear in certain areas of the body. This indicates that many people doing the same role/task are suffering from the same symptoms.

The evidence from the study along with the potential causes and solutions suggested by the members can then be taken to the employer.



Addressing the Issues Raised

As we know, apart from the employers legal obligations around health and safety, it is also in their interest to be made aware of any health, safety and welfare issue within the workplace.

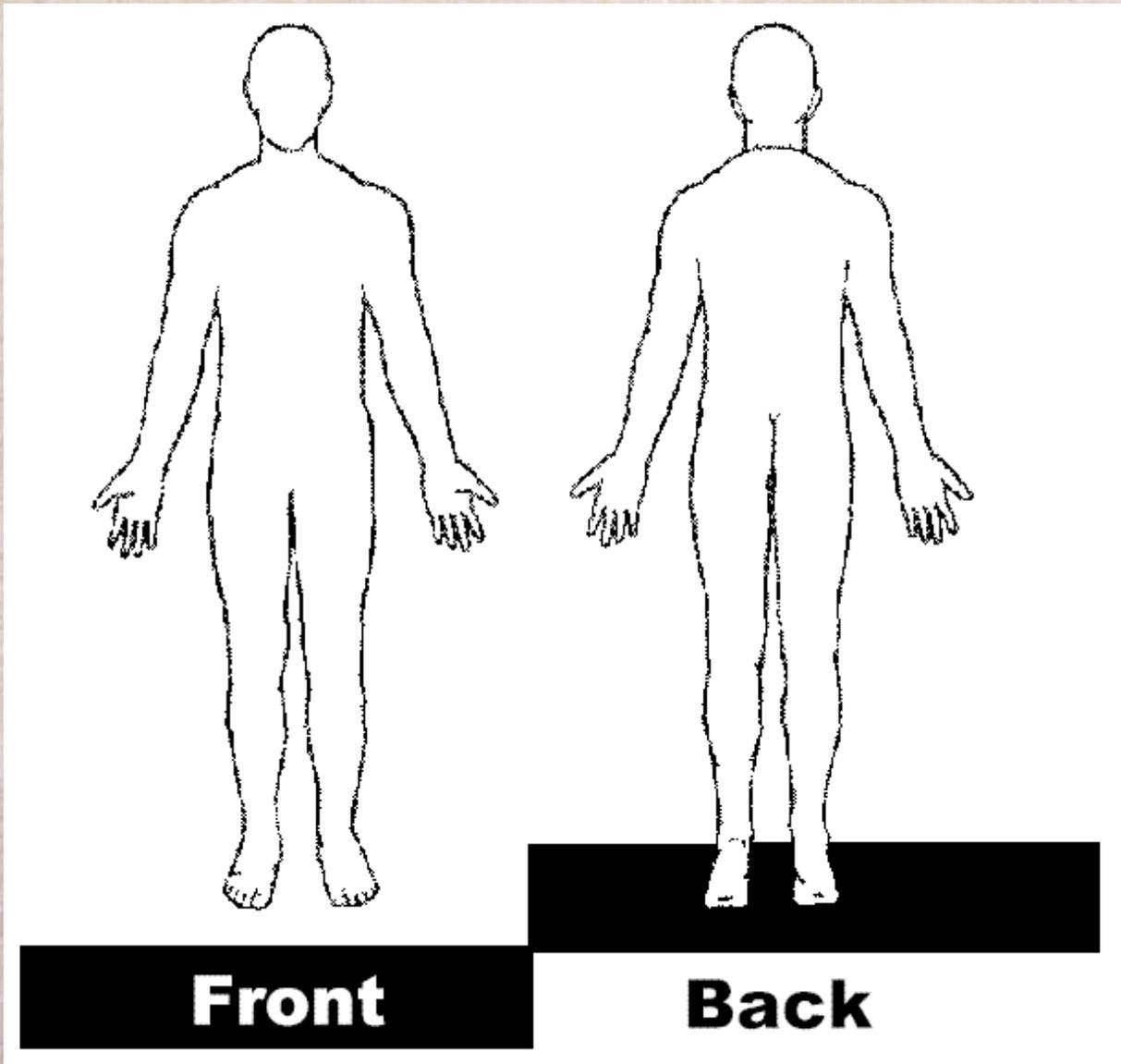
It is of equal interest to the employer, as it is our members, to ensure that workplaces are healthy and fit for purpose.

Workers whose health suffers as a result of work will have more time off sick and will be less productive. There is also the possibility of long term damage and possible employer liability.

The results of your body mapping study should be presented to management as part of your recognised TSSA Health and Safety reps duties. Members should also be shown the results of the study and made aware of any discussions held with management. Any improvements either implemented or proposed by the employer can then be monitored not only by the Health and Safety reps but also by the affected members. Inform members when improvements have been made, make everyone aware of what TSSA has achieved.

The Body Map Chart

This chart is for reference. A larger print off version is available in the TSSA H&S reps toolkit. If you have problems accessing a printer or would like a larger copy please contact your TSSA regional office.



Protection for Health and Safety Reps

The rights and functions of safety reps do not place any legal duties on them.

This means that a safety rep has no greater liability in law for health and safety breaches than any other employee.

TUC **BROWN BOOK**

For further information on regulations, points of clarity and guidance, reps should also refer to the TUC Safety Representatives and Safety Committees, Commonly known as the 'Brown Book'.

