

## Protecting Your Knees and Your Quality of Life

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Plumbing, heating and cooling contractors put their knees to task almost every day. For plumbers it may involve kneeling on a tile floor and for heating or cooling contractors it's usually a concrete floor. Once a person has chronic knee pain it can adversely affect their overall approach to doing their job. Simply put, if your knees hurt, you certainly don't look forward to getting down on a cold concrete or tile floor to get a job done!

### ***The High Cost of Knee Pain***

When a tradesmen starts having knee problems it often leads to loss time on the job or may even limit what tasks they may take on. The \*Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that in 2003, 46% of lower extremity injuries incurred by PHC contractors (leading to days away from work), were due to knee injuries. With the spiraling costs of health insurance and Workmen's Compensation, increasing safety awareness is no longer optional; it has become essential to staying productive and profitable in the PHC trade.

### ***Knee Support Products Evolve***

With the significant advance of support devices and materials designed for knee support, there are many options available to today's PHC professional. If mobility in the field is required, "strap on" style knee pads may be the best support system to employ. If stationary work is being done, using a commercial grade kneeling pad is another very effective option. Using support device requires carrying them to the jobsite and utilizing them, but your knees will benefit greatly if you do.

### ***Implementing Safety Procedures***

Whether you work for yourself or have employees, now is the time to take full measure of your safety tools. Many business owners are now supplying their employees with safety tools and then requiring them to use them when needed. Conducting a safety discussion with employees is also a great way to help determine what their specific ergonomic challenges are in the field. Including them in your decision making shows your concern for their well being and is a good practice since they become part of the safety solution.

Knee support pads have become a necessary tool for PHC contractors and it's up to you to take full advantage of the added comfort and support that's now available for your knees. In summary, we all have one set of knees and they are invaluable when it comes to our quality of life at work and at home.

\*Bureau of Labor Statistics / U.S. Department of Labor:  
Ref. 2003 BLS  
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