

SAVE YOUR BACK

Back injuries are among the most common workplace accidents. Keep your back strong and healthy with these tips:

EXERCISE regularly. Walking, cycling, rowing, weight training and stretching help to strengthen your back and keep it flexible and injury-free.

Bonus: Exercising three to four times per week for 30 minutes or more helps control your weight — a great boost to back safety.

LIFT correctly. Always bend your knees and lift with the large muscles of your legs, rather than bending at your waist and lifting with your back.

PUSH, don't pull. Need to move a heavy load? You can push twice as much as you can pull, and pushing is less likely to hurt your back.

AVOID slips, trips and falls. Keep traffic areas free of electrical cords, boxes, trash cans and debris. Wipe up spills right away and tack down any loose carpeting or flooring.



Preventing Crime at Work

Your work area is your home away from home. You would never think of leaving your front door wide open when you leave home, so why take risks at work? Here are some tried-and-true workplace crime prevention tips:

Keep your purse, wallet, keys and other valuable items with you or locked in a drawer or closet. Mark personal items such as a radio or calculator with your name and an identification number.

Secure your work space, with special attention to confidential documents and company equipment, when you leave the area. **Example:** Log off your computer before going to a meeting. Lock desks, cabinets and storage areas when not in use.

Report any broken lights, dimly lit corridors, broken locks or windows to the building manager.

Don't put personal financial information on work computers. You're inviting someone to steal your identity.

Check the identity of any strangers — ask who they're visiting and offer to help them find that person. If this makes you uncomfortable, inform security or management.

Stay alert if your job involves exchanging money with the public. Insist on identification before you cash any checks.

Always let someone know where you'll be — out to lunch, in a meeting or in the copy room.

Park in a well-lit and well-guarded parking garage. If you're going to be in a building until dark, park near the entrance when you arrive. As you leave, have your keys out and ready before you go to your car.

Stand next to the control panel when riding in an elevator with a stranger. If you're threatened or attacked, punch all the floor buttons. **Reason:** You'll get a chance to escape or yell for help on each floor as the doors open.

Safety: It's Your Responsibility



Safe Pathways

Help keep walkways hazard-free to prevent slips, trips and falls.

- Avoid stacking books, papers or equipment in designated walkways.
- Cover or flag holes in the floor, and notify a supervisor if you notice wet or slippery spots.
- Wipe up spills immediately and sweep up debris.
- Slow down; many falls happen when people are walking too fast. If you do fall, don't break the fall with your wrists. Try to let your larger body parts (such as your buttocks) take the impact.

IS YOUR MIND ON YOUR WORK?

You're Sleep Deprived

Fatigue is a leading cause of accidents. If you find yourself constantly tired during work hours, falling asleep immediately when you sit still or nodding off frequently, you could be putting yourself at risk.

The solution:

- Strive for 7-8 hours of sleep per night.
- Supplement with 20-minute naps when needed.
- Keep to a regular sleeping schedule, even on days off.
- If you suffer from regular insomnia or wake up tired despite a full night's sleep, talk to your doctor. Sleep problems can be treated.

You Take Medication

Many prescription and over-the-counter medications, including pain relievers, allergy medicines, antidepressants and heart medications, can cause drowsiness and unfocused thinking, making a person more accident prone.

The solution: Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the potential side effects of any medication you take. If you must use a medication that causes drowsiness, avoid driving, operating machinery or other dangerous tasks while taking it.

You Don't Manage Stress

Your muscles tighten, your mind wanders, you have difficulty making decisions or focusing on the work at hand, you become forgetful. These are all symptoms of stress, and they can increase accident and injury risk.

The solution: Find ways to manage the stress in your life. **Ideas:** Exercise ... practice a hobby ... find support through friends and family ... take time for yourself.

Safety Gear at a Glance

■ For Your Hands Only:

On the job ... Selecting the right work gloves for the job can help protect you from injuries. Whenever protective gloves are required for your

job, make sure the gloves fit well, are comfortable and are rated to guard against the particular hazard you face. Replace the gloves if they become damaged.

Off the job ... Avoid mild burns and dry skin by wearing gloves when using cleaners, detergents and chemicals.



■ Heads Up:

On the job ... OSHA requires a protective helmet or hardhat to be worn on the job by anyone in an area where there is a potential for head injuries, such as from falling objects. Periodically check the hardhat or helmet for signs of deterioration such as stiffness or brittleness; don't store the hat in extreme temperatures or direct sunlight, and replace after an accident or impact.

Off the job ... Wear a helmet when riding a bicycle, a scooter or while in-line skating.

■ Ear Gear:

On the job ... Wear special earmuffs or earplugs to dampen noise that can cause hearing loss.

Off the job ... Use earplugs from a pharmacy or hardware store when using motorized tools, watching auto racing or attending rock concerts.

■ Eyes Wide Open:

On the job ... Whenever there is a risk of flying objects, chemicals or injurious radiation, wear

eye protection: goggles that meet American National



Standards Institute (ANSI) standards for on-the-job use.

Off the job ... When you're involved in do-it-yourself projects at home that involve working with hand and power tools, auto repair and gardening, or sports such as racquetball, handball or hockey, be sure to wear safety goggles.

Remember:

Protective equipment alone can't prevent accidents and injuries, but it's your first line of defense.

Pull Over and Dial

Vehicle accidents while using car phones are on the rise. Research shows that driving while using a cell phone is as dangerous as driving drunk! **Tips for talking:**

- When you need to make a call, pull over, stop the car, make the call and hang up before you get back on the road. Invest in a hands-free phone.
- Don't try to take notes while driving. Remember, the fewer distractions you have while driving, the safer you are.

EACH YEAR HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF INJURIES OCCUR DUE TO IMPROPER LADDER USE.

What to do:

1. Use the right size and type of ladder for the job.
2. Secure the ladder correctly and make sure it is steady.
3. Never climb on the top two rungs.

Your Commitment to Safety

- ✓ Be aware of your job hazards and take proper protective measures.
- ✓ Don't take chances or unnecessary risks.
- ✓ Watch out for your co-workers' safety.
- ✓ Follow the rules, don't cut corners and use your equipment as specified.
- ✓ Concentrate on your job and eliminate distractions.
- ✓ Keep your work area clean and clutter-free.