

SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

More than a million people are injured in slips, trips and falls every year. Make your workplace safe with these suggestions.

At the office:

- Remove computer and telephone cords from underfoot.
- If you need to reach something or change a light bulb, use a footstool or stepladder. Don't use your desk, a box, a wastebasket or an office chair.
- Take your time. Many falls happen when people are walking fast or running.
- Properly tack down or otherwise secure loose carpet or flooring edges.
- Keep walkways free of clutter.

On the production floor:

- Mark walkways and keep them clear of debris and clutter.
- Clean up spills right away.
- Use adequate lighting in work areas.
- Don't carry large loads by hand. Objects that are too heavy or too big don't allow you to see properly.
- Put nonskid surfaces on ramps, gangplanks and loading docks.



More safety tips:

- **WEAR** proper footwear. Buy snug-fitting, low-heeled shoes with nonskid soles.
- **KNOW** your medications: Read the labels for side effects, and be extra careful if any list dizziness, drowsiness or loss of coordination.
- **HAVE** your vision checked, and if needed, wear your glasses or contact lenses.
- **EXERCISE** regularly: Physical fitness improves your balance and coordination and makes your bones and muscles stronger, lessening your chance of injury.

4 Deadly Combinations

1. Ladders and Wires. Since aluminum conducts electricity, ladders made of this material can be hazardous if used near electrical wires. Besides, aluminum ladders are so lightweight that sudden movements or strong winds can sometimes knock them over. **For your safety:** Use a wooden or fiberglass ladder, not an aluminum one, when working on your house.

2. Bleach and Ammonia. When chlorine bleach is combined with ammonia cleaners or with ammonia-containing dishwashing liquids (like Dawn, Joy, Ivory or Palmolive), it can give off a poisonous gas that can instantly inflame your lungs. **For your safety:** Always read labels first, before mixing any chemicals.

3. Medications and Medicines. All medications — prescription and over-the-counter — can cause side effects and interfere with each other. **For your safety:** Whenever starting any new medication, remind your doctor or pharmacist of any drugs you are currently taking.

4. Storms and Utilities. Plumbing and phone equipment can conduct electricity if lightning strikes your building. **For your safety:** During thunderstorms, avoid bathing, showering and using regular and cellular telephones.

Did You Know?

If you frequently change the toner cartridge in the copy machine, use caution. Overexposure to toner dust can cause headaches and irritate your eyes, nose and throat. Liquid toners can aggravate eczema and dermatitis, so known sufferers should avoid changing or loading toners, or should at least wear rubber gloves.

Watch Out!

Safety Hazards

Are Everywhere



Risky Business

You're working in a fast-paced environment with high expectations for productivity and results. The last thing you need is to be sidelined because of an accident or injury. Safety hazards are indeed everywhere, so stay alert and stay safe.

Fatigue Is Your Enemy

One of the most dangerous hazards isn't found lying around your workplace, and it affects millions of people: lack of sleep. Fatigue can cause the same effects as alcohol, putting you at serious risk for injury. Don't nod off — strive for 7-8 hours of sleep daily or take naps when necessary.

Judge whether you're sleeping enough by how alert you are while awake. If you need caffeine, constant activity and other stimulation to stay awake, or you require long naps, you're probably not getting enough sleep. **Fact:** It's impossible to sleep too much. Unless you suffer from a sleep disorder, you will wake up (without an alarm) when you've slept enough.

Common Hazards

- Risk of electric shock, electrical burns and electrocution from working around electricity
- Repetitive stress injuries (RSIs) as a result of repeated motion of the wrist, hand and arm
- Hearing damage as a result of exposure to loud noise
- Slips, trips and falls

Electrical Safety

Take these safety precautions when working around electricity:

- ✓ Know the location of all electrical power emergency cutoff switches.
- ✓ Don't overload outlets.
- ✓ If you must use an extension cord, be sure it is the proper type for the equipment or appliance, and don't overload it.
- ✓ Be sure electrical power is disconnected before cleaning or repairing an appliance or tool.
- ✓ Check all electrical tools, appliances and equipment regularly for damage or wear.
- ✓ Inspect all electrical cords and outlets for cracks, fraying or other damage.
- ✓ Use the least amount of voltage possible to get the job done.
- ✓ Be sure appliances and tools are switched off before plugging or unplugging them.
- ✓ Ensure safe practices when digging around buildings where there may be underground electrical cables or when working near overhead power lines.
- ✓ If you work in an area where electrical equipment could be unsafe (such as a wet or tight space), consider using hydraulic, compressed-air, battery or hand-powered tools.

NOW HEAR THIS

Continuous exposure to sound levels exceeding 90 decibels (louder than a lawnmower or shop tools) will eventually cause permanent hearing loss. Wear hearing protection if your work requires it, and have your hearing tested regularly.

Repetitive Stress Injuries

About RSIs ... Repetitive stress injuries occur most frequently with employees who have jobs that demand repetitive movement of the wrist, hand and arm. RSIs can affect anyone who grips something tightly or works the wrist. One of the most common repetitive stress injuries is *carpal tunnel syndrome*.

Carpal Tunnel Q & A

What is carpal tunnel syndrome?

- Carpal tunnel syndrome is the swelling of tendons in the wrist, which puts pressure on nerves
- The condition is painful and can be disabling if allowed to progress without treatment

What are the symptoms?

- Pain and tingling in one or both hands, especially at night
- Feeling of weakness, thickness or swelling in fingers
- Tingling during the day in the thumb, index and ring fingers
- Clumsy hands or difficulty picking up objects

Who gets it?

Carpal tunnel syndrome can affect anyone who performs repetitive motions as part of a job or hobby. Activities that commonly cause the condition include:

- Typing on a computer
- Cutting hair
- Performing surgery

- Playing a musical instrument
- Using high-vibration tools such as jackhammers or drills

Can carpal tunnel syndrome be prevented?

Carpal tunnel syndrome can be prevented in several ways:

- Taking frequent breaks, getting regular exercise to strengthen and stretch your muscles, stretching out your hands and wrists often, and varying tasks when possible to lessen repetitive motion
- Modifying tools, such as reducing vibration or changing grips so they fit your hand better
- Improving the ergonomics of the work space, such as adjusting

