

Take Care of Your Back, and it Will Take Care of You continued

and keeping good posture, doing back stretches before and after work and regular exercise are just three ways. As susceptible as our backs are to injury it is extremely important to do everything we can to protect them. That is why it is important to know and understand the causes of back pain and correct lifting procedures which will help us to live and work safely.

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Slips, Trips and Falls

By: Kristi, VanSoest Safety Specialist

Did you know that slips, trips, and falls are only second to automobile accidents in causing personal injury? On stairways alone, falls result in almost two million disabling injuries yearly. There are thousands more minor injuries caused by slips, trips, and falls each year. Most alarming of all is the fact that industrial falls cause over 1000 deaths each year.

Statistics show that the majority (60 percent) of falls happen as a result of slips and trips. The remaining 40 percent are falls from heights.

Slips occur when there is too little friction between a person's feet and the walking surface. Many factors can cause a slip. Ice, oil, water, cleaning fluids, and other slippery substances are probably the most obvious causes. However, the cause may be the flooring or not wearing the proper shoes. To prevent slips, avoid walking in areas which pose slipping hazards if at all possible. Always clean up spills immediately, and try preventing the spills in the first place. If an area is a chronic problem, try to re-route walking paths. Keep floors in good shape and always follow your company's safety shoe policy.

Trips occur when a person's foot contacts an object and they are thrown off balance. The main cause of tripping is obviously when something is in a walkway and it causes someone to trip. Material or objects stored low on shelving, sticking out into an aisle way, is another precursor to trips. Poor lighting and uneven walking surfaces will also cause tripping. To prevent trips, keep objects out of the way of walking, and make sure floors are in good shape and lighting is adequate.

Falls are usually the result of slips and trips. Falls also occur without slipping and/or tripping. Falls can occur due to improper use of ladders and scaffolding. Falls happen when people don't use proper fall protection equipment. Falls are the most serious in terms of slips, trips, and falls. Don't take shortcuts when climbing, and always use fall protection when required.

Slips, trips, and falls cause numerous injuries each day. They are, however, among the easiest hazards to correct. Always inspect your work area daily for possible hazards and ways to prevent them. Always remember these eight things: don't be in a hurry, pay attention to your step, clean up spills, practice walking safely, use safety shoes, maintain proper lighting, exercise stair safety, and inspect your ladder. When you remember these simple things, you tremendously reduce your chances of slips, trips, and falls.

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