

Types of Injuries - How Workers Get Hurt

Accidents can happen anywhere and at any time. Many workplace accidents and injuries can be prevented if workers know the causes of accidents and they are taught how to protect themselves to avoid injury. Although no one wants to get hurt at work, there are four major causes for injuries on the job.

Back injuries

The number one cause of on-the-job injuries is physical overload. These injuries are caused by lifting (too heavy a load or lifting improperly), straining, overreaching, bending, and twisting. To protect your back against injury, learn and use proper lifting techniques, never bend or twist while lifting or carrying, and whenever possible, use a mechanical aid or get help with the load from another worker.

Hitting or striking against

The second most common cause of worker injury is being hit by or hitting against an object. The best way to protect against these accidents is to be alert to the potential hazards and to use appropriate protective equipment (hard hats, eye protection, gloves). Be aware of your body and the space around you. Give yourself enough clearance when passing by or ducking under equipment or going through a passageway.

Falls

To avoid injuries from falls, be sure that your footing is firm and wear slip-resistant soled shoes. Watch where you're walking. Don't walk backward to direct equipment or leap from one level to another. Make sure you can see over the load you carry and that walkways are well-lighted and clear of obstacles. Clean up spills or grease spots and use handrails when walking on stairs.

Machine Accidents

The fourth major cause of on-the-job injury is machine-related accidents, that is, getting caught by moving machine parts. When working around any moving equipment (a machine that rotates, slides, or presses) always use safety shields, guards, and lock-out procedures. Only work on a machine that you have been trained to use. Never wear jewelry or loose-fitting clothing that could get caught in the moving equipment.
