



Slips, Trips, & Falls

Each year in the United States more than 300,000 people suffer disabling injuries from falls. Slips, trips and falls are often fatal, claiming more than 1,400 lives each year. They rank second only to automobile accidents as a cause of fatalities through accidents.

Slips, trips and falls are very common and has happened to just about everyone. These mishaps are often dismissed as unpredictable accidents and are not taken seriously if no one is injured. The responsibility of the incident is half environmental and the other half on the individual. The key to preventing injuries is making sure the environment is as safe as possible and that the individual is aware of their surroundings.



HAZARDS



Slips occur when there is too little friction or traction between footwear and the walking surface.

- Clean and dry surfaces normally provide enough traction. But hazards such as dirt, water, food, oil, ice and other contaminants covering walking surfaces can cause slipping accidents.



Trips occur when your foot strikes or hits an object causing a person to lose balance and fall.

- Trips are most commonly caused by object and environments such as cracked or uneven walkways, holes or raised surfaces, small items on the floor, and power cords.

Falls are not always caused by obvious hazards such as tripping over a cord or slipping on a wet floor. Everyday human behavior leads to just as many falls as other dangers such as:

- Walking too fast, not paying attention to where you are walking, distractions, texting or being on the phone, carrying material that blocks your view.



STAIRS AND LADDERS

Falls from stairs and ladders are much more serious than regular falls to ground level. Stair and ladder falls are from much higher levels and therefore these injuries are much more severe. Any time you use the stairs or use a ladder take extra precautions to ensure your safety.



Tips when using stairs

- Be sure that stairwell is well lit
- Never run up or down the stairs
- Check to see if the stair treads are in good shape
- Always use the hand rails
- Avoid carrying large loads when using stairs

Tips when using a ladder

- Never use a broken or defective ladder
- Make sure the ladder is on solid footing
- Never stand above the recommended step
- Never reach too far off of the ladder



INJURY PREVENTION

To prevent slips, trips and falls in the workplace, everyone must stay on the lookout for hazards. There are many ways everyone can help out, from wiping up a spill or picking up an item in an aisle way are great ways to prevent someone else from having an accident. Edges or changes in elevation should be marked with brightly colored paint or have anti-slip reflective caution strips applied.

Here are some other ways to prevent accidents.



Practice Good Housekeeping

- Removing obstacles from walkways
- Closing file cabinet drawers
- Securing rugs, mats or carpets that are not flat
- Keeping the work environment clean and orderly

Make Behavioral Changes

- Pay attention to surfaces
- Avoid rushing
- Identify and report workplace hazards
- Avoid jumping to lower levels
- Scan ahead for potential slip and trip hazards

