



Hand injuries are among the top reasons workers end up in the emergency room.

According to OSHA, **one million workers are treated in the ER for hand injuries annually.**

**Hand injuries are the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common type of workplace injury (National Safety Council)**

Here are the most common types of hand injuries and what you can do to prevent them:

**Contact Injuries result** from working with solvents, acids, cleaning solutions, flammable liquids, and substances that can cause burns or injure tissue.

**Protect yourself against these injuries by reading the product labels**, wearing the proper protective gloves, and washing your hands frequently throughout the workday. Don't touch unintended objects or surfaces with contaminated gloves.

**Repetitive motion injuries occur** when tasks require repeated and rapid hand movements for long periods. Manufacturing, assembling, or computer work can lead to this type of injury.

**Reduce the occurrence of repetitive motion injuries** by changing the grip you use when handling different items. Also, change the physical position of your hands and alternate the hand motion as you complete your work. Select tools that are safe and

easy to use. Do not make repetitive, unnatural, or awkward motions.

**Traumatic injuries often occur** from careless use of machinery or tools. Your hands and fingers can be caught, pinched, or crushed in a machine's chains, wheels, rollers, or gears. Chop saws, metal shears, and grinders can cause hands and fingers to become cut, seriously injured, or even amputated.

**To avoid traumatic injuries to the hands and fingers**, take safety precautions and use shields, safety guards, gloves, or safety locks when working with machinery. It is also essential to ensure jewelry, loose clothing, or long hair are not entangled in moving parts. Long hair should be pulled back or in a bun. Baggy clothing should be avoided when working around machinery with moving parts.

**Protect yourself from hand injuries** by following basic safety rules:

- Recognize hazards before starting work
- Think through each job before you begin
- Follow all safety rules
- Avoid taking shortcuts
- If an accident does occur, seek prompt treatment
- Report injuries to your supervisor as soon as possible

Report all injuries to your supervisor; even the smallest scratch can become infected and result in a serious health issue. Take a moment and think what it would be like to experience a serious injury to your fingers or hand. Simple routine tasks such as tying your shoes, picking up a spoon, or petting your dog would change forever.