

# Preventing Work-Related Injuries to the Hand, Wrist or Elbow

No matter how many precautions we take, work-related injuries to the hand, wrist, finger or elbow seem inevitable. Here we discuss common hand injuries, the most common causes of workplace injuries and how to prevent them.



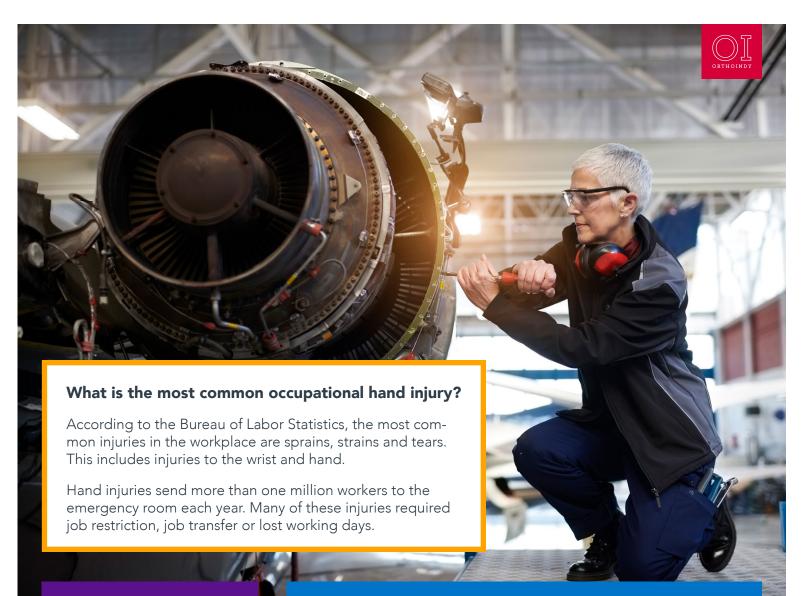
For most jobs, especially trade-related occupations such as construction jobs including carpentry, flooring or plumbing and mechanical jobs such as a locksmith, machinist or auto mechanic, you need your hands to do your job.

Without the reliable use of your hands, you aren't able to work. Therefore, safety in the workplace should always be the number one priority. However, even the most skilled and reliable workers are susceptible to work-related injuries of the hand, which can be painful and result in time off work or high financial costs.

Ortholndy hand, wrist and elbow specialist.

If you have an open wound, a concussion, a burn, an animal bite or you are bleeding, go to an emergency room right away. Ortholndy trauma physicians are located at the <u>Trauma Center at St.Vincent Indianapolis</u>, and there is a team of experts on call 24/7 to handle orthopedic traumas.





are one of the most common injuries in the workplace which means with medical costs or disability claims, they add up to be expensive to treat, both for employers and employees alike. The good news is that hand injuries are also one of the easiest injuries to prevent.

- Dr. Matthew Walker

### 6 Most Common Hand Injuries in the Workplace

- 1. **Lacerations:** Lacerations are deep cuts or tears in the flesh. Most lacerations are easily treated, but nerve or tendon damage is possible if the cut is deep.
- 2. **Crushes:** Occur when a body part is caught between heavy equipment or machinery and another hard surface, like the floor or a wall.
- 3. **Avulsions:** Fractures that occur when a bone is moving one way and a tendon or ligament is moving or pulled in the opposite direction.
- 4. **Detachments:** Can occur like an avulsion but are typically more serious and often involve entire fingers or hands becoming separated from the body.
- 5. **Punctures:** Occurs when a sharp object penetrates the skin and causes a wound that is typically narrower and deeper than a cut or scrape.
- 6. **Fractures:** A break in a bone most commonly in the hand or wrist which requires weeks to months of recovery time.

Additional hand hazards include electrical burns, exposure to chemicals, frostbite, penetration, contusions, sprains and strains.





## How can hand injuries be prevented at work?

"Be mindful of your workplace and take the extra steps to preventing injury part of your daily routine," said Dr. Walker. "Sometimes it can be tempting to ignore safety measures because you are trying to hurry and get a job done or you think a hand injury won't happen to you after doing a job for many years. However, a hand injury can occur to anyone at any time."



#### **Quick Safety Tips**

- Wear appropriate safety gear such as work gloves when handling rough materials and when hands are directly involved with lifting or moving objects
- Always use machinery guards
- Replace machinery guard and lock machinery or confirm it is turned off before reaching into it
- Remove trip hazards from work sites before beginning a job
- Do not wear any rings when working as it could get caught in machinery or on an object
- Wear gloves to pick up broken glass or nails
- Wash hands frequently to remove grease and oil and prevent slippery hands
- Be cautious when setting down items with your hands to make sure you have enough space or time to prevent crushing fingers
- Never wear gloves around quick moving machinery which can catch on the glove and pull the hand into the machine
- Remove protruding items such as nails, sharp edges or splinters before working
- Do not wear gloves or loose clothing that doesn't fit correctly; ask your employer for safety gear that fits appropriately
- Be aware of emergency stop devices or buttons around automatic machinery

## 3 Tips to Reduce Hand Injuries

- 1. **Speak up:** If you don't feel comfortable or safe in your workplace speak to management. Your employee wants to reduce injury in the workplace as well and might not be aware that you don't have the proper equipment.
- 2. **Take a safety course:** Many construction companies offer first-aid training for their staff. Learning about health and safety can help you become more aware of hazards and how to avoid injury.
- 3. **Educate yourself on the machinery:** Ask for a training program on equipment or have someone else explain the machinery to you so you are aware of the danger zones and how to minimize hazards.





With years of experience and the most advanced technology, Ortholndy hand, wrist and elbow specialists will give you the best chance possible to achieve your goals. Make an appointment or visit one of our urgent care clinics and let Ortholndy's team of experts help you get normal back, whatever your normal looks like.



be causing it and how you can prevent future injuries view our Ultimate Guide to Hand, Wrist and Elbow Injuries.