

Get The Upper Hand...

Practice Hand, Wrist And Finger Safety

Every year more than 100,000 workers **suffer** injuries to the hand or fingers that result in **lost work days**.

In June, **two-thirds** of Argonne's OSHA Recordable injuries and four first aid cases involved **hand injuries**. These were a result of being struck by a moving object (such as a rotating fan), lacerated and punctured by sharp objects, or contact with a chemical or a hot liquid. In two cases, the injuries were severe enough to require treatment by a hand specialist. These incidents happened in labs, offices and outdoors.

What are the risk factors?

Researchers at the *Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety*, collaborating with the *Harvard School of Public Health*, interviewed 1,166 workers who suffered injuries to the finger, hand, or wrist while at work to determine the risk factors that contributed to these injuries.

The researchers found that the risk of hand injury was significantly elevated when people worked with equipment and tools that did not perform as expected (such as jammed machine parts), when they used

an unfamiliar work method, when they performed an unusual task, or when they were being rushed or distracted.

Other factors contributing to increased risk of hand injury include worker inexperience, inadequate training, inadequate lighting, horseplay, no lockout/tagout systems, and failure to use or own the correct tool for the job.

Wearing gloves reduced the relative risk of injury by up to 60 percent, the study showed.



Even the hand you use matters

When left handed workers operated right handed tools or equipment, the risk of injury increased.



How can you protect your hands?

There are many types of personal protective equipment (PPE) for the hands, each designed for specific hazards.

When selecting hand PPE, carefully **match the protection to the hazard and the task.**

If you are uncertain about selecting the proper hand PPE, there are many places to go for help:

- check the applicable **Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)**
- consult your **ESH Coordinator**
- contact **Industrial Hygiene or ESQ Safety**

How do I pick the proper gloves?

If gloves are required for your work, follow these steps:

1. Choose the material and style of glove that is best suited to the hazard and job.
2. Follow the glove manufacturer's instructions carefully.
3. Inspect and test gloves for defects before using them.
4. Ensure your gloves fit properly.



PROTECT YOUR HANDS



- Keep your hands where you can see them.
- Be alert to potential hand hazards.
- Use the correct tool for the task.
- Be alert to possible unguarded pinch points.
- Use push-sticks, guards, shields, and other protective devices if possible.
- Use brushes to wipe away debris.
- Inspect equipment and machinery - assure it is in good operating condition.
- Disconnect power and lock out machinery before repairing or cleaning it.
- Do not remove guards.
- Never wear jewelry or loose clothing near moving machine parts.