

Preventing Foot Injury

During a typical workday, you may be exposed to various hazards that can potentially cause foot injury: working on slippery or uneven surfaces, working around or with heavy equipment and machinery, or working with electricity. Crucial to preventing foot injury is identifying the potentially hazardous conditions *before* you begin working, and safeguarding your feet accordingly.

Foot injuries can be the result from falls or slips, or from direct injuries such as a puncture, a sprain or a laceration. The first step in protecting your feet from injury is choosing the appropriate footwear for the job. For example, certain conditions may require steel-toed boots to further protect the toes and top of the foot from injury. If you are unsure of the type of foot protection required for the job, don't hesitate to ask your employer and coworkers for advice and/or help.

If there is a possibility of puncture from stepping on sharp objects such as screws, nails or wires, footwear with extra puncture protection should be used. Similarly, when participating in potentially hazardous electrical work, be sure to use insulating or conductive footwear. If your job involves carrying heavy loads, be sure to wear footwear with impact protection. If there's a chance that an object may fall or roll over your feet use shoes with impact protection, otherwise the chance of serious injury will increase.

If you have questions or concerns about the correct safety footwear needed for your job ask your employer for instruction and training. Understanding the importance of using proper footwear protection is the first step in injury prevention. Awareness and training of your own personal safety is very important, and may help in the protection against potentially serious foot injury.

