

Are older workers more likely to suffer a workplace injury?

Older workers often face the stigma that they are more likely to be injured on the job and cost their employer more money. Are older workers more likely to be injured at work and if they are, what are employers doing to prevent injuries to older workers?

More people are working longer and putting off retirement. This could be a safety issue for some employers, especially those who employ older workers in industries where [workplace injuries](#) are more likely to happen.

Despite the thought that older workers suffer more accidents and injuries on the job, the National Council on Compensation Insurance reported that younger workers and older workers actually suffered roughly the same number of injuries on the job but the types of injuries were different depending on the age of the worker. They reported that workers under the age of 35 suffered more injuries involving cuts while workers over the age of 35 suffered more neck injuries as well as had more cases of carpal tunnel syndrome.

Workplace safety applies to all workers, regardless of age. However, it may be beneficial for employers to know what kinds of injuries are more common among workers under 35 and over 35. Understanding what type of injuries workers are more likely to suffer should help companies address potential safety hazards as well as come up with safety initiatives to prevent these types of injuries from happening in the future.

Employers also need to remember to promote workplace safety to their employees. This includes raising awareness about the importance of reporting a workplace injury. Studies have shown that workers who feel comfortable enough to report a workplace

accident or injury are more likely to come back to work sooner as well as feel safer at work if they know they won't be punished for reporting an accident or safety hazard.

Even when employers try to make the workplace safe, accidents and injuries still happen. Workers should understand their rights to seek workers' compensation after being injured on the job. It doesn't matter how old a worker is, every worker is entitled to file a workers' compensation claim.

Source: EHS Today, "[The Changing Definition of 'Older' Workers](#)," Kevin Ring, Feb. 7, 2013