

# Older health care workers have higher risk of injury

We've previously discussed the high risk of workplace injuries for health care workers in the United States. Health care workers suffer more workplace injuries compared to other industries, and a new study shows that older health care workers are more likely to be injured on the job.

The study found that older workers in the health care industry face many hazards in the workplace and as a result, are more likely to suffer injuries. Worse, the study reported that many workplaces are not taking steps to protect older workers from accidents and injuries.

The study found that older workers are more likely to be injured in slip-and-fall accidents as they get older. In fact, the risk of suffering an injury from slipping, tripping or falling at work is almost five times higher for older workers over the age of 65 compared to younger workers.

As workers get older, their ability to perform certain job functions change. The study said that the reaction time, strength and balance among older workers changes and increases the risk of being injured. Older workers are more likely to be in supervisory roles instead of physically demanding ones. However, they are still at risk for injuries due to the tasks they perform and the physical ability to complete these tasks.

These findings are somewhat troubling as the hospital workforce in the country continues to get older and delays retirement. Health care organizations will need to take action to prevent workplace injuries among older workers as well as among all workers. It is important for workplaces to understand the specific risks older workers face to help them take proper steps to reduce these risks and hopefully prevent

injuries in the workplace.

**Source:** EHS Today, "[Slip-and-Fall Injuries 5 Times Higher for Older Healthcare Workers than Young One](#)," Sandy Smith, Dec. 4, 2013