Repetitive Motion: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a repetitive-motion injury. It occurs when an important nerve is regularly pinched and compressed. Workers with CTS commonly feel pain, weakness, and tingling, usually in the first three fingers of the hand and the base of the thumb. Symptoms are often most severe during sleep. Serious cases can be disabling.

Ann's Story

Ann first noticed symptoms of CTS when her fingers would tingle and her hand and wrist would begin to feel numb the longer she held a tool. She went to her doctor and explained the type of work she performed and the problems she was having holding tools. The doctor did some tests and told Ann that she had CTS.

- What caused the CTS?
- How could this have been prevented?
- Have you ever had symptoms of CTS or do you know someone who has? If so, what happened?

Remember This

- Use tools designed for the job.
- Use tools that keep your wrist in a neutral position, rather than a forward or backward bend, to minimize force.
- Use a two-handled tool that has a spring return so the handle automatically returns to the starting position, and has a locking position if continuous force is required.
- Wear gloves or use anti-vibration wraps to improve grip strength and lessen the shock of vibrating tools.
- Rest your hands periodically.
- Reduce repetitive movements.
- Vary your arm's position when performing an activity.

How can we stay safe today?

What will we do at the worksite to prevent repetitive motions that can cause carpal tunnel syndrome?

OSHA General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1) of the OSH Act

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
NIOSH National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
CPWR The Center for Construction Research and Training

Construction Toolbox Talk

NIOSH CPWR

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Learn more at **Choose Hand Safety** website.

- ☑ Use tools designed for the job.
- ☑ Wear gloves or use anti-vibration wraps to lessen shock and vibration.
- ☑ Rest your hands periodically.
- ☑ Keep your wrists in a neutral position.

GET INFORMATION

CDC/NIOSH INFO: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) | TTY: 1-800-232-6348 | cdc.gov/info | cdc.gov/niosh
CPWR: Contact 301-578-8500 | cpwr-r2p@cpwr.com | www.cpwr.com/toolbox-talks
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