



Construction Injuries Predict Long-Term Health Outcomes

Long-term health outcomes of work-related injuries among construction workers – findings from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth

Xiuwen Sue Dong, Xuanwen Wang, Julie A. Largay, and Rosemary Sokas. American Journal of Industrial Medicine, March 2015.

Overview

Researchers examined blue-collar construction workers using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (1979 Cohort, N=1,435) to test the association between work-related injuries and long-term health outcomes.

Key Findings

- In a 12-year follow-up period, more than half of the construction cohort experienced at least one work-related injury: 38% reported injuries resulting in days away from work (DAFW); another 15% were injured but reported no DAFW (NDAFW).
- At age 40, an average of 10 years after injury, workers who had DAFW injury were about twice as likely to report worse physical and mental health as those without workplace injuries.
- Workers with DAFW injury in their past were more likely to have diagnosed diseases and health problems, such as back pain, joint pain, depression, or emotional problems. One-third of workers with DAFW injuries reported three or more health problems, compared to only one-fifth of those without injury.
- After adjusting for major demographics and duration in blue-collar occupations, the odds of a health problem were double or worse in 17 of the 20 measured conditions for workers with DAFW injuries compared to workers without injuries.
- Adverse health effects from occupational injury among construction workers persist longer than previously documented.

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