

TECHNICAL INFORMATION PAPER SERIES: SLIP-AND-FALL PREVENTION



AVOID COSTLY SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS IN YOUR HEALTHCARE WORKPLACE.

PREVALENT YET PREVENTABLE

200,000

That's how many on-the-job injuries result from slips, trips and falls in the U.S. each year.¹

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Slips and falls are the second most frequent type of employee injury within hospitals, long-term care and other healthcare settings.² And the result can be costly in every way:

- Human suffering
- Lost time
- Medical and workers' compensation claims

In healthcare settings, slips, trips and falls are among the most prevalent causes of serious injury. Not only can they lead to a lifetime of pain and discomfort, but can also exact high costs in insurance claims and time off the job. Yet, this is one of the easiest types of injuries to help prevent.

Follow these best practices to develop and implement sound loss prevention measures.

EXAMINE YOUR FACILITY FOR RISKY AREAS

Potential danger zones, inside and outside, are often overlooked. Ask yourself these questions.

ARE THERE ANY OBSTRUCTIONS?	ARE THERE ANY SLICK AREAS TO AVOID?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical equipment cords, wiring, tubing, etc. • Tools, equipment, hoses or other maintenance items left on the grounds • Clutter or debris on the floor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contaminants on the floor, such as food, grease, bodily fluids and water • Inherently wet areas such as showers, bathrooms, kitchens • Leaking or damaged equipment • Areas exposed to adverse weather, such as stairs or entranceways • Areas of poor drainage (pipes and drains) and adverse weather conditions (ice, snow, rain)
COULD STRUCTURAL ELEVATIONS OR AIDS BE A PROBLEM?	CAN PEOPLE EASILY SEE WHERE THEY'RE GOING?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stairs, steps or ramps • Stepstools and ladders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate lighting inside or outside
WHAT ABOUT IRREGULARITIES IN THE WALKING SURFACE?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor surface cracks, holes or bumps • Floor mats and runners that are damaged, rolled or folded • Pot holes, unmarked curbs, ramps, cracks, uneven sidewalks 	

PUT YOUR FACILITY ON FIRMER FOOTING

Help make your facility a safer zone with these tips.

Maintenance and improvement

- Properly clean and dry floors
- Promptly repair uneven or damaged walking surfaces
- Check equipment regularly and maintain to prevent leaks
- Proper floor surfacing (abrasive or non-slip tile) in inherently wet areas
- Replace worn or damaged mats
- Keep ladders available and in good condition

Preventive aids

- Use appropriate non-slip floor mats and place them properly
- Install proper surfacing (abrasive or non-slip tile) in inherently wet areas
- Use retractable cords, cord holders or covers
- Use slip-resistant stair treads and nosing
- Install hose holders or winders outdoors

Clear signage and visibility

- Use “wet floor” signs or barriers to warn of wet conditions
- Create visible cues for changes in elevation
- Ensure adequate lighting: report low light level areas or light bulbs that need to be changed

USE A DOSE OF PREVENTION IN WORK PRACTICES

Put these tips into practice to help reduce the potential for slip-and-fall incidents.

Inspect

- Examine floor surfaces regularly for potential hazards
- Follow proper or special work procedures for wet areas

Report and alert

- Slip/trip hazards should be immediately reported; alert employees and visitors
- Use weather warning indicators during winter to alert staff to snow and ice

Organize, repair and maintain

- Schedule floor maintenance for non-peak times
- Keep work areas organized, eliminating clutter
- Properly dispose of debris
- Store tools and equipment properly when not in use

Practice prevention

- Wear non-slip soled footwear
- Use handrails on stairways
- Use grab rails for stability in lavatories when assisting patients or residents
- Never rush; give each task the time it requires
- Clean up spills and liquids immediately
- Don't carry too much – it may block your view

Learn

- Participate in accident or injury prevention investigations to prevent recurrences

MORE ON SLIP-AND-FALL PREVENTION

Contact your agent or Risk Engineering consultant from The Hartford. And visit these sites:

- [NIOSH](#)
- [AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION \(ANA\)](#)
- [OSHA](#)
- [CDC](#)

VIEW OUR ON-DEMAND WEBINAR: *Slips, Trips and Falls for Employees and Non-employees.*
Or click to our [WEBSITE](#) for more information.

¹ bls.gov/iif

² cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2011-123

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