

POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Preventing Strains and Sprains Associated with Manual Handling and Slips, Trips and Falls

The main causes of musculoskeletal injuries such as twisted ankles, sprained knees, tendonitis and back injuries are manual handling tasks, along with slips, trips and falls. Use this checklist from WorkSafe Victoria in Australia to ensure you are taking adequate steps to minimize these types of injuries.

Manual Handling

Quick checks to help prevent injuries

- Tasks are designed to avoid workers having to handle things
- Worker activities are varied to use different muscles
- Mechanical aids are used to move items, eg: trolleys, forklifts, hoists
- Mechanical aids are maintained so they are easy to use
- Equipment is available to move or support patients and clients
- Work surfaces are the correct height for workers
- Hand tools have anti-vibration and anti-kickstart features
- Frequently used objects are within easy reach
- Storage areas are organized to reduce the need to bend and stretch to reach items
- Workers are trained to use equipment safely and understand the manual handling risks

Slips, Trips and Falls

Quick checks to help prevent slips, trips and falls

- Floors are maintained, eg: no holes, uneven surfaces, curled up carpet edges
- Floors are kept clean and dry and have sufficient grip to prevent slipping
- Any ramps, raised platforms or changes in floor level are highlighted
- Water, oil, grease, cardboard, offcuts and wrappings don't end up on the floor
- Walkways are well-lit and free from clutter
- Work areas are tidy, and adequate storage space and bins are provided
- Designated areas are used for deliveries
- Cleaning methods and equipment are suitable for the workplace
- Cleaning happens regularly, and access is restricted when it's in progress
- Spills are cleaned up immediately
- Workers wear the most suitable footwear for their job
- Workers know how to ascend and descend ladders, vehicles and stairways safely