

Toolbox

Safety Series



HAND INJURIES – PART 1

Each year in the US over 16 million people suffer hand injuries; over 250,000 of those are serious and disabling. The hand is one of the most complex parts of your body - the movement of the tendons, bones, tissues and nerves allows you to grip and do a wide variety of complex jobs.

Without your hands it would be extremely difficult to do routine simple tasks, such as opening doors, using a fork, or tying your shoes. Tuck your thumb into your palm and imagine trying to tie your shoes. It would be extremely difficult.

Hand injuries are difficult to repair because of the complexity of the hand. After a hand injury, the hand may not function as it did before the injury due to loss of motion, dexterity and grip.

Over 25% of all industrial injuries involve the hand, wrist and fingers.

Typical injuries include:

- ▶ Puncture wounds
- ▶ Lacerations
- ▶ Broken fingers
- ▶ Contusions
- ▶ Thermal Burns
- ▶ Chemical Burns

These injuries occur when:

- ▶ Cutting or using a sharp tool
- ▶ Using hand tools
- ▶ Reaching into moving parts
- ▶ Working with chemicals
- ▶ Touching something hazardous (electrical or thermal)

Next we'll look at preventing hand injuries.

