



10 Ways to Prevent Hand Injuries



Finger injuries are common and range from minor cuts and scrapes to wounds with major damage to bone, tendons, and ligaments. If not treated properly, serious finger injuries can lead to permanent deformity and loss of function. The best thing is to take all necessary precautions to avoid finger injuries.

Finger injuries include:

- A laceration (cut) may only go through skin, or it may cut through blood vessels, nerves, and tendons that lie just under the skin
- An avulsion occurs when part of the skin or soft tissue is torn off
- With an amputation, tissue is completely cut or torn away from the finger

Fingernail injuries include:

- The fingernail and the underlying nail bed are the most commonly injured part of the hand
- If a fingernail is injured by a direct blow, the underlying bone may also be broken

Fractures – Broken bone

Dislocation – An injury to a joint that causes a bone to move out of its normal alignment

Ligament injuries (sprains)

- Tendon injuries – A tendon can also be torn away from its bony attachment, which is called an avulsion fracture
- Nerve injuries
 - Sensation to the finger is supplied by two nerves, one running along each side of the finger
 - Damaging the nerve can cause numbness on the side of the finger supplied by the nerve



1. **Beware of pinch points.** Train yourself to recognize pinch points and avoid placing your hands and fingers in such hazardous spots.
2. **Expect the expected.** When using wrenches and other hand tools, with which you expect resistance, anticipate that the tool might slip or the object to which pressure is being applied may suddenly give way.
3. **Inspect tools.** Check to see if they are in good condition and safe to use.
4. **Do not work on moving equipment.** If the equipment can be stopped, do so. Working on moving equipment presents a real threat to hands and fingers.
5. **Replace machine guards following repairs that require removal of guards.** The presence of machine guards is an important factor in keeping hands and fingers out of dangerous areas.
6. **Be mindful of equipment that starts automatically.** Never work on such equipment without first eliminating the possibility of automatic startup.
7. **De-energize electrical equipment prior to working on it.** Flash burns caused by electrical equipment shorting out are a threat to hands and fingers when work around such equipment is being performed.
8. **Be mindful when closing doors.** Keep hands and fingers clear. Also, watch for children's fingers in the family car.
9. **Avoid touching lines or equipment that is hot.** Every hot line or hot piece of equipment is a potential source of painful injury to any hand or finger that comes in contact with it.
10. **If the work being performed requires gloves, use them.** Gloves offer protection from sharp objects, wood and metal splinters, acids, electrical burns, chemicals, and many other sources of injury.

