



WINNING THE WAR ON ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES EIGHT ISSUES TO KEEP YOU SAFE

No matter where you are or what you do, safety matters. The following information will key you in to eight critical safety issues. With this information, you'll be able to stay safe at home and in the workplace.

1. Motor Vehicles

Approximately 40,000 Americans die in motor vehicle accidents every year. More than two-thirds of these fatal accidents are caused by improper driving—speeding, failure to yield or stop, not staying in your lane, following too closely.

Want a 40-50% better chance of surviving a crash? Always wear your seatbelt! Want to avoid more severe injuries? Always wear your seatbelt! Want to avoid hospital admission and huge expense? Always wear your seatbelt! One final question for parents: Want a 71% better chance that your child will survive a crash? Always use a child safety seat!

2. Fires & Burns

With 1.4 million injuries and 5,000 deaths annually, fires and burns are a huge issue. Approximately 80% of these deaths take place in the home—we as individuals must do more. We must:

- ✓ *Install smoke detectors and test them often—death in residential fires is two to three times more likely in homes without smoke detectors*
- ✓ *Keep a close eye on portable heaters, fireplaces, and Christmas trees*
- ✓ *Stop smoking—it's a leading cause of residential fires*
- ✓ *Keep lighters, matches, and all flammable material safely away from children*
- ✓ *Set hot water heaters at or below 120-130°F*

3. Electric Shock

Whether in the workplace or in the home, the risk of electric shock is serious and can be deadly. Here are the main issues you'll want to keep in mind.

First and foremost, know what you're working with. When working with machinery or equipment, be careful to note the possibility of

electric shock. The safest thing to do is to turn the power source off. Second, never reach blindly—an exposed wire may be hiding in a dark place. If you're working with "live" wires or machinery, you'll also want to make sure that your tools are properly insulated—this includes ladders.

On that same note, you'll want to remove any conductive items or apparel—watches, rings, belt buckles—anything that could put you at risk for electric shock. Finally, be careful to note and act accordingly when working around water, which is a high conductor of electricity.

4. First Aid In The Workplace

Every 20 seconds, an injury occurs at the workplace. You need to know what to do in the event of one of these emergencies. You could save a life! Right now, before it's too late, you can sign up for first aid courses. This is the best plan of action. In first aid courses, you'll learn all the basics and be prepared to offer quick, calm, and correct action.

Now, if you should encounter an emergency situation before you're able to complete a first aid course, there is still aid you can provide. Start by recognizing that an emergency has occurred and make the decision to act. Quickly call 911—this is the most important thing you can do! Lastly, comfort the individual and communicate with others in an attempt to find help for the victim until medical personnel arrive.

5. Hazardous Materials

A hazardous substance is any material that poses a threat to human health or the environment. This can include toxic, corrosive, ignitable, explosive, or chemically reactive substances.

In the workplace, the key to proper safety is paying attention to labels and material safety data sheets (MSDS). Checking these two sources of information will enable you to understand the danger of a substance and allow you to use it properly.

In the home, it is also important to use labels and make sure everyone in the family knows what materials are hazardous and that they should be avoided or used properly by adults only. Never put a substance in an unmarked or mismarked container. Keep hazardous substances out of the accessibility of children and be absolutely positive that all substances are in childproof containers.

6. Clothing And Attire

Proper clothing and attire is commonly referred to as personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE includes gloves, hard hats, safety glasses, goggles, face shields, safety shoes and boots, hearing protection, protective clothing, and respirators. Whenever and wherever you work, you should consider the proper clothing and attire.

The main issues when it comes to PPE include the "three rights." The right PPE for the job, the right personal fit, and the right pre-job inspection of the gear. By following the three rights, PPE can keep you safe from many hazards.

7. Slips, Trips, And Falls

Each year, about 12,000 Americans die as a result of falls. And no, older adults are not the only ones at risk. In fact, almost 600 employees are killed on the job each year due to falls.

So what are the causes of all these falls? Unsafe ladders and unsafe ladder use, stairs, slippery or wet surfaces, poor lighting, improper footwear, running or moving too fast, and damages or openings in flooring. The list is extensive, but safety can be enhanced with the right attitude. Be smart and think about falls and how to avoid them.

8. Lifestyle Ergonomics

Lifestyle ergonomics is the science of fitting all of life's jobs to the worker. A "well-fit" job will help the worker avoid devastating musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) that can occur over time. Carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, and problems with circulation are some leading examples.

To avoid these injuries, try to reduce the amount of force needed to perform tasks. Also, reduce awkward or difficult movements by optimizing your working environment.

Speak up! If you have symptoms such as numbness or tingling, weakened grip, or reduced range of motion, consult a physician and your work supervisor immediately.





Better Safe!



WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs... Oh My!

by David Gobble, PhD

Drugs have been part of all cultures throughout history, and today you have many choices regarding your drug taking behavior. The simplest choice is to avoid all drugs, especially alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs. If you are using any drug on a regular basis, become more aware of its consequences, in particular, if you are using it at a safe level. For example, if men consume no more than two alcohol drinks per day (24 oz of beer, 2 oz of hard liquor, or 12 oz of wine), and women just one per day (half the amount listed above), they are generally drinking at a safe level.

TOBACCO

Tobacco, and a wide variety of illegal drugs, presents another problem. Tobacco at any level is harmful to health. If you use tobacco products, smoking, chewing, or any other method, please stop. Get help from a smoking cessation specialist or quit on your own. It is never too late to benefit from quitting.

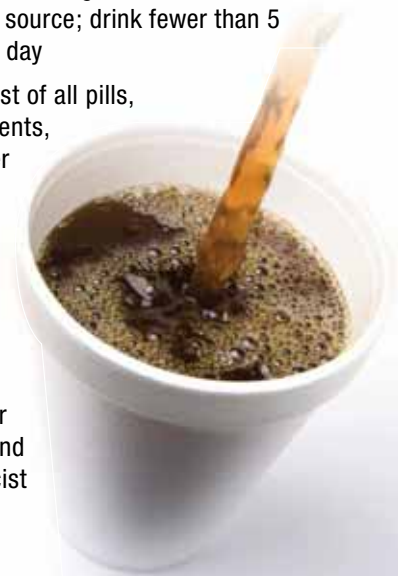
ILLICIT DRUGS

A good rule for long term health is to eliminate illicit drugs. If someone offers you anything that you cannot verify an appropriate dose, or determine if it is an approved drug/medication, don't take it. Remember, anything you put in your body must be metabolized, and your liver and other body systems will be challenged to do this extra work. As you age, your body loses some ability to clear drugs from your system. The rule of moderation is applicable for all drugs; use them sparingly and you will support your desire to age well.

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Basic Steps to Take Control of the Drugs In Your Life

- ↓ Eliminate tobacco products as soon as possible
- ↓ If you drink alcohol, limit consumption to no more than 2 drinks (men), or 1 drink (women) per day
- ↓ Do not take any illicit drug
- ↓ Review all prescription drugs with your Doctor and make certain you are taking the smallest effective dose
- ↓ Ask your Pharmacist if any drugs you are taking, both prescribed and over the counter, are unsafe when taken together
- ↓ All drugs require your body to work harder, especially your liver, so only take something new when absolutely needed, and take it at its lowest effective dosage
- ↓ Caffeine is a drug with coffee its most common source; drink fewer than 5 cups per day
- ↓ Keep a list of all pills, supplements, and other things you take on a regular basis. Share this list with your Doctor and Pharmacist



Wellness Council of America
9802 Nicholas Street, Ste. 315 | Omaha, NE 68114
Phone: 402.827.3590 | Fax: 402.827.3594
www.welcoa.org