



## Hand Protection

Whether you're a machine operator, a lab technician or an office worker, your hands are one of your most important "tools."

### Mechanical Hazards

Be alert around machinery at all times. Avoid moving machine parts to prevent cuts, punctures and crushing hazards:

- Use "helpers" such as push sticks and brushes to avoid placing your hands in dangerous areas.
- Never remove or tamper with safety devices such as guards or kill switches.
- Disconnect power when adjusting, cleaning or repairing machinery and follow proper lockout/tag-out procedures.
- Remove watches and other jewelry before working with machinery. Don't wear gloves around moving machine parts. Never wear gloves containing metal around electrical machinery.

### Chemical Hazards

Chemical hazards are a common cause of dermatitis (inflammation of the skin). Signs include sores, blisters or dry skin that gets infected easily.

#### For protection:

- Wear gloves and other appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Remove gloves last, after taking off other protective clothing.
- Wash hands often, especially after exposure to irritating substances and before eating, smoking or leaving the workplace.
- Use appropriate cleansers to wash hands.
- Clean or change work clothes as often as necessary.
- Read the labels and SDS sheets for any chemicals you use. Follow recommended safety precautions.

## Types of Hand Protection

Choosing the right type of glove for hand protection is important. Cover all exposed skin and make sure the glove fits snugly. Use additional protection such as barrier creams or glove liners when necessary.

### Glove choices include:

- Metal mesh – for those who use knives or cutting tools
- Insulated – protects against electric shock
- Leather – protects against sparks, rough surfaces and bruises
- Lead-lined – protects against exposure to radiation
- Rubber or vinyl – protects against corrosive chemicals
- Cloth – protects against moderate heat and moderately sharp edges
- Disposable plastic – guards the wearer and/or the substance handled (i.e., food)

## Hidden Hazards: Repetitive Motion Injuries

Repetitive motion injuries may be overlooked as they happen during routine activities such as lifting, twisting, hammering, pressing or pulling. Symptoms include:

- Numbness of fingers or palms
- Tingling sensation, soreness or pain, weakness
- Pale skin or skin that turns cold
- Difficulty moving fingers, shoulder, elbow or wrist

If you have any of the above symptoms, advise your supervisor. You may need additional follow-up with a healthcare provider.

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Safety tips developed based on generally accepted safety standards believed to be reliable at the date of publication. Information is for general guidance only and should not be relied upon for legal compliance purposes.

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