

# THE INDUSTRIAL ATHLETE DIGEST

Weekly Wellness & Safety Tips from Work Right NW



## SETTING THE SCENE FOR INJURY PREVENTION

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BY SAM DOCTORIAN, ATC



Pulled muscles are unpredictable and sometimes hard to prevent. Variables like body composition, type of work, underlying health conditions, and other uncontrollable factors contribute to them. However, with *cuts and lacerations* injuries, there are controllable and concrete strategies which are almost foolproof to keep you from injury. In 2019, cuts or lacerations comprised **10% of workplace injuries** (89,730 injuries out of 888,220 total). This number can easily be *sliced* with simple and practical strategies.

Let's set the scene at your worksite...




### PROP CHECK

Before you begin work, **(R) Review Your Hazards** and **(E) Evaluate Your Equipment**. And be thorough with your checks of tools and machinery, ensuring that:

- You use the proper tools for the particular task
- Blades to be used aren't dull
- Replacing dull blades with sharp ones
- Electric drills aren't jammed and have enough battery
- Ladders are secure with all legs touching the floor
- Harnesses have no rips and the buckles fasten securely
- Lifts are properly rising and lowering
- Area of work is clear of trip and slip hazards like puddles, cracks, wires/cords, as well as hanging objects.

### COSTUMING

Personal Protective Equipment (**PPE**) is equipment worn to help minimize or eliminate exposure to certain hazards - including cuts and lacerations!


-   **Gloves:** This is a no-brainer (*or hander?*). **Almost 70%** of cuts and laceration injuries are hand-related. Wear cut-resistant or heavy duty gloves to diminish injury risk.
-   **Hard Hats:** Not only do hard hats minimize the effects of blunt force traumas, but reduce injury risk from sharp or pointed objects from above.
-   **Eyewear:** Wear glasses/eyewear with side protection if you are working where there are flying objects and particles.

### GETTING INTO CHARACTER

Okay. The work scene looks right. The tools are in good shape. Your gear is on. But what else? Just looking the part isn't quite enough of a strategy to prevent these injuries. Optimize the scene with mindfulness! This means to be aware of where you are and what's going on around you - also known as **situational awareness**. Look for signs, listen for alarms. Stay focused while performing mundane or repetitive tasks.



Putting these tactics to use **MUST** come by habit, and habits take conscious effort to develop. Change your mindset from, "I wear PPE because it's required" to, "I wear PPE so I can avoid serious injury."

This mindset shift is crucial in using the tools provided to efficiently and safely perform your job tasks. Aaaaand CUT scene - er... I mean, ACTION! 



**Samuel Doctorian, MS, ATC** || Sam is a Certified Athletic Trainer with almost 3 years of experience managing musculoskeletal injuries in the industrial setting. He obtained his Master's in Athletic Training degree from Azusa Pacific University. He enjoys playing all kinds of sports - he even has a "coach bag" with all different kinds of sports equipment in his car so that he's always ready to play.

**Work Right NW** is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialists in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.

### SCRIPT NOTES

A study done on construction workers in 2019 showed only **60% used PPE during work!** Discomfort, fit, and lack of motivation were the common reasons why PPE wasn't worn 100% of the time. According to

OSHA, the proper use of PPE can prevent 37.6% of occupational injuries. Get out there and wear your gear!

