



## SQUEEZE THE DAY

BY NICK HUENEBURG, MS, ATC, CES, CEAS

What can grip strength tell us? Grip strength has been shown to have positive correlations with overall muscular health, endurance, and even longevity. Studies have linked strong grip with lower risks of cardiovascular disease, better mobility in older adults, and fewer injuries in physically demanding professions. It is also a strong indicator of upper body and core strength. Conversely, weak grip strength has been associated with higher injury rates, lower work capacity, poor posture, and greater difficulty performing repetitive or heavy-duty tasks. In many occupational settings, diminished grip strength can be an early sign of muscular imbalance or overuse injuries.



### THE GRIP ADVANTAGE

How can grip strength impact industrial athletes? Grip strength plays a vital role for industrial athletes working in physically demanding jobs such as construction, manufacturing, logistics, and warehousing to name a few. These workers rely on their hands for nearly every task, from lifting heavy boxes to operating tools and machinery. A strong grip allows more efficient work, reduced fatigue, and maintenance of body mechanics throughout the day.

Moreover, consistent grip strength reduces the likelihood of chronic strain or acute injury, which are common in these roles due to repetitive motion and heavy loads.

### ELBOWS IN & THUMBS UP

Grip strength plays a crucial role in supporting proper body mechanics, particularly in maintaining key form cues such as keeping the elbows in and thumbs up. When grip strength is high, the forearms, wrists, and hands are able to stabilize more effectively. This stability promotes better

control of the load, helping the lifter keep their elbows tucked in and thumbs pointed upward, which optimizes muscle engagement and reduces strain. These cues are important for all real-world tasks that involve pushing, pulling, lifting, or carrying.



### LOSING OUR HOLD

On the other hand, lack of grip strength can often lead to compensatory movements. When the hands and forearms can't handle the load, the elbows tend to flare out, and the wrists may collapse inward or twist. This compromises body mechanics, increases the risk of injury to the shoulders and back, and leads to inefficient force transfer. Poor grip can also result in an inability to maintain a firm hold. This can limit the duration or intensity of physical tasks and cause fatigue to set in more quickly.

### PREVENTION FAVORS THE PREPARED

So, what can we do to make sure we're squeezing the best out of what our bodies can do? First, let's take an accurate measure of our grip with a functional grip strength test. Check in with your onsite injury prevention specialist for use of their dynamometer to get an accurate reading.

Then, check out recommendations for hand strengthening and flexibility exercises by scanning the QR below.

Carpe Squeeze'em!



**GRIP STRENGTH FUNCTIONAL TEST**

**HOW TO**

1. Hold onto a dynamometer with the arm extended out in front of the body at shoulder height. Curl as tightly as you can for 5 seconds and release.
2. Read score and repeat on other side.

**WHY THIS TEST?**

The industrial athlete requires a strong grip not only for the line of work, but also for a strong shoulder that will keep arms without the other. See if you qualify for a grip strength reading.

**HOW TO IMPROVE?**

Tendon Glides

Age	Male	Female
20-29	41.00	31.00
30-39	42.00	32.00
40-49	43.00	33.00
50-59	44.00	34.00
60-69	45.00	35.00
70-79	46.00	36.00
80-89	47.00	37.00
90-99	48.00	38.00



**Nick Hueneburg, MS, ATC, CES, CEAS** || Since 2022, Nick has applied his expertise in ergonomics, injury prevention, and human performance within the industrial setting. Outside of work, he enjoys spending quality time with his wife and two kids, sipping coffee before chaos, chasing toddlers through kids' museums, and mastering the fine arts of bedtime negotiations and tiny toy assembly—usually without instructions.



**Work Right** 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.