

UC Medical Center

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

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Avoiding Slips, Trips and Falls

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POSTER OF THE MONTH



Did You Know?

- Slips and falls account for over 1 million emergency room visits annually
- Fractures are the most serious consequences of falls and occur in 5% of all people who fall
- Slips and falls represent the primary cause of lost days from work
- Slips and falls are the leading cause of workers' compensation claims and are the leading cause of occupational injury for people aged 55 years and older
- Floors and flooring materials contribute directly to more than 2 million fall injuries each year
- 85% of workers' compensation claims are attributed to employees slipping on slick floors
- Compensation & medical costs associated with employee slip/fall accidents is approximately \$70 billion annually
- 22% of slip and fall incidents resulted in more than 31 days away from work
- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics [2009], the incidence rate of lost-workday injuries from slips, trips, and falls (STFs) on the same level in hospitals was 38.2 per 10,000 employees, which was 90% greater than the average rate for all other private industries combined (20.1 per 10,000 employees). STFs as a whole are the second most common cause of lost-workday injuries in hospitals.
- Slips, trips, and falls result in 17% of all nonfatal workplace injuries—the highest frequency of injury of any single regulated activity

Patients and visitors are also at risk of slips, trips, and falls in our facility unless we take proper precautions to protect them and us!

References:

- Industrial Safety @ Occupational Health Markets, 5th edition*
- National Safety Council Injury Facts, 2003 edition*
- US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2002)*
- US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009)*
- Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)*

Top 10 Slip, Trip and Fall Hazards

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the following are the most common slip, trip and fall hazards in a healthcare facility.

1. Contaminants on the floor
2. Poor drainage
3. Indoor walking surface irregularities
4. Outdoor walking surface irregularities
5. Weather Conditions
6. Inadequate lighting
7. Stairs and Handrails
8. Stepstools and Ladders
9. Trip hazards (clutter, loose cords, medical tubing)
10. Improper use of floor mats

What Can You Do?

Safety is everyone's responsibility. Do your part!

1. Report and/or clean up spills immediately; if a spill can't be cleaned up right away, place "wet floor" warning signs for others
2. Keep walkways and hallways free of debris, clutter and obstacles
3. Practice good housekeeping- remove trip hazards from your work area
4. Remove cables or cords that may pose a trip hazard
5. Keep cabinet doors and desk drawers shut when not in use
6. Make sure stairs are safe; use the handrail
7. Be mindful when walking- watch where you're going, and wear comfortable, properly fitted shoes
8. Don't carry loads that block your vision
9. Report uneven floor surfaces immediately
10. Report burnt-out light bulbs promptly

DO YOU WORK IN A WET OR SLIPPERY ENVIRONMENT?

The University of California, Office of the President provides slip-resistant footwear to employees who routinely work in wet or slippery environments. The goal of the UC Slip-Resistant Footwear Program is to reduce the frequency and severity of slips and falls for employees working in slippery environments. For more information, visit our [web page](#).

Use This Checklist to Find Fall Hazards in Your Work Area

Read each statement and place a check mark in the box indicating either Yes or No. If a check mark falls in a red-shaded box, that indicates a hazardous condition may be present and require further attention.

Slip/Trip Hazards	Yes	No	Comments/Location	Responsible Party
Indoor Walking and Working Surfaces				
Do tiles, linoleum, or other flooring have holes, cracks, or bumps?				
Is carpeting buckled, loose, or frayed?				
Are carpet edges curled up?				
Does floor feel greasy or slippery?				
Are liquid contaminants present (water, grease, oil, cleaning solutions, coffee, body fluids)?				
Are dry contaminants present (powder, sawdust, dirt, flour, food, wax chips)?				
Are there sudden changes in indoor floor elevation > 1/4"?				
Are there metal grates or mesh flooring in the walkway?				
Are water absorbent walk-off mats used in entrances?				
Are slip-resistant mats used in wet areas?				
Stairs and Handrails				
Are all handrails 34–38" from the floor?				
Are handrails provided on slopes, ramps, stairs?				
Do handrails extend at least as far as the last step?				
Are handrails provided at steps (employee shuttle bus stop, entrances, conference and training rooms)?				
Are the edges /noses of each step painted or marked?				
Are stairway risers and steps all of uniform size?				

Tripping Hazards				
Are cords bundled using a cord organizer?				
Are cords on the floor covered with a beveled protective cover or tape?				
Are cords mounted under the desk or on equipment?				
Are hallways, stairs, and walkways clear of clutter (boxes, cords, equipment)?				
Is there appropriate storage (closet, shelves, hooks, lockers)?				
Are stepstools available for use in areas with overhead storage?				
Do rolling office chairs have a sturdy base (no less than 5 legs)?				

(Adapted from the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) [Slip, Trip and Fall Prevention for Healthcare Workers](#))



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FEEDBACK PLEASE

Send an email to safetyspotlight@ucdavis.edu to submit your comments on the February issue or to suggest content ideas for future issues. We look forward to hearing from you!

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