

Footwear - Legislated

The *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996*, states:

Footwear

96(1) Subject to subsection (4), an employer or contractor shall ensure that:

- (a) a worker uses footwear that is appropriate to the risks associated with the worker's place of employment and occupation; and
- (b) a worker who may be at risk from a heavy or falling object or who may tread on a sharp object uses approved protective footwear.

In healthcare there are a number of risks that could cause injury, even loss, of a toe, toes or the whole foot. Wearing appropriate footwear is law; it is also a leading practice that helps to reduce, manage or eliminate risk of injury.

The work area is one piece to consider with appropriate footwear - other considerations are all of the tasks being done by a worker in that work area. We need to ask ourselves "Will my footwear protect my feet while doing all of the tasks in this work area?" Some examples are:

Area/task	Possible risks	Appropriate footwear	Safety benefit
kitchen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ chopping food using knives and sharp blades ▪ loading and unloading dish washer ▪ moving heavy large, frozen food products in walk-in freezers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ stepping on broken glass ▪ cut by sharp object ▪ infection ▪ stubbing of toe(s) ▪ heavy or falling object 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ closed toe ▪ closed heel ▪ secure to the foot ▪ made from material that provides some upper foot protection ▪ designed for walking and/or standing ▪ slip resistant ▪ light 	reduces/eliminates risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ losing a toe, toes or entire foot ▪ cut or infection ▪ fatigue ▪ slip
client care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ moving equipment such as mechanical lifts and beds ▪ engaging brakes and steering mechanisms ▪ transporting body fluids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ cuts ▪ scrapes ▪ run over/crush toes and/or foot ▪ splash with contaminated body fluids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ closed toe and heel ▪ secure to the foot ▪ protective upper foot material; non-perforated to eliminate fluids seeping into the shoe ▪ designed for walking and/or standing ▪ slip resistant ▪ light 	reduces/eliminates risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ losing a toe, toes or entire foot ▪ cut or infection ▪ fatigue ▪ slip
maintenance/materials management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ climbing a ladder ▪ wheeling equipment ▪ entering crawl spaces ▪ use of tools and equipment ▪ use of utility knives ▪ moving heavy objects ▪ using powered mobile equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ stubbing of toe ▪ slipping off of a ladder rung ▪ cut by sharp object ▪ stepping on sharp object (e.g., broken glass) ▪ heavy or falling object ▪ electrical shock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ closed toe and heel ▪ secure to the foot ▪ constructed of a material that will protect against blunt force (e.g., safety toe cap) ▪ anti-shock ▪ slip resistant ▪ light 	reduces/eliminates risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ losing a toe, toes or entire foot ▪ crushing of toe, toes or foot ▪ cut or infection ▪ fatigue ▪ slip

Can you think of other risks, work areas or tasks that have risks? What type of appropriate footwear would reduce or eliminate the risks? What footwear standards should be in place?

note: also refer to *Safety Talk - Footwear - Walk Safe to and from Work*

Safety Talk Discussion

Be Accountable: Choose safety - work safe - and go home injury free!