

## Module F: Prevent

This module presents information on:

- preventing concussions in the workplace, and
- tips to promote health and safety.

Concussions in the workplace are typically caused by slips, trips, and falls, or hits to the head. For occupations that involve driving, vehicle crashes are also a common concussion-causing event. In certain industries such as healthcare and law enforcement, concussions can be caused by violence. The following tips may help prevent concussions in the workplace:

Strategies to prevent slips, trips, and falls include:

- Making sure walkways and work spaces are free of clutter, cords, puddles of water, or other hazards;
- Using proper signage to alert workers of wet surfaces;
- Using an appropriate step stool, access platform, or ladder instead of standing on chairs, desks or tables;
- Exercising caution when working from heights;
- Knowing how to use fall protection and fall restraint equipment; and
- Wearing the proper type of safety footwear.

Strategies to prevent hits to the head include:

- Keeping shelves, storage areas, and work spaces clean and organized to avoid falling objects;
- Using signage on low hanging obstacles; and
- Placing the heaviest objects on the floor or the lowest possible shelving.

Strategies to prevent motor vehicle crashes include:

- Reducing driving hours, recognizing that fatigue and short rest time between shifts can lead to crashes; and
- Implementing a distracted driving policy

Strategies to prevent violence include:

- Implementing policies for those working directly with people who have a history of violence, substance abuse, or gang involvement;
- Providing training for recognizing and managing hostile and assaultive behaviours;
- Implementing a system to support people who work alone;
- Addressing areas with inadequate lighting, such as parking lots or stairwells;
- Addressing obstacles that could block vision or interfere with escape routes from a violent incident;
- Adjusting staffing levels, such as adding additional security or mental health personnel;
- Implementing appropriate means of emergency communications; and
- Exercising vigilance and providing support when working in neighbourhoods with high crime rates.

In any occupation, it is important to report all unsafe conditions to the nearest supervisor. Conducting workplace risk assessments, developing and implementing prevention programs and procedures, training workers in proper protocols, and evaluating policies are key steps in reducing the risk of concussion in the workplace. Just as concussion recovery and return to work requires a team approach, preventing concussion is everyone's responsibility.

Concussion is an invisible injury, but that does not mean that it needs to be silent: creating a culture of reporting injuries in the workplace, openly communicating challenges and barriers during return to work, and supporting injured workers decreases absenteeism, employee turnover, and insurance and compensation costs.

Continue to the quiz to test your knowledge on preventing concussions.