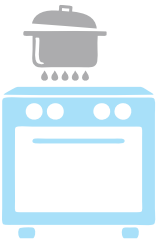




Mount Sinai

Selikoff Centers for Occupational Health

Health and Safety for Food Service Workers



Occupational injuries and illnesses in the food service industry are problems affecting everyone involved — from dishwashers to servers, cooks, and cleaners. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reported high prevalence for health conditions in food service workplaces: 61% of workers claimed nasal irritation, 47% eye irritation, and 22% having post-hire skin problems.¹ The American Burn Association indicates that the food service industry also presents the highest skin burn rate, at 26.5 %, of all workers. In NYC specifically, a 2011 study found that a concentrated population of restaurant workers reported working in fast-paced, repetitive, and physically demanding environments, some of which involved chemical exposures. The most prevalent injuries associated with this group were musculoskeletal disorders, representing 63% of total injuries.²

Maintaining a safe workplace for food service workers not only reduces injuries, it can lead to improved employee satisfaction, strengthen workplace relationships, and increase employee success. Employees who feel safe can help food service businesses/restaurants achieve higher financial performance and improved customer satisfaction.³

Don't Work Through Pain!

Protect yourself every day by:

- Wearing proper, personal protective equipment (i.e. gloves, shoes, sleeved shirts, etc.)
- Ensuring adequate ventilation
- Keeping spaces clear for walking
- Reducing distractions
- Using handtrucks to move large objects
- Knowing where first aid kits hang
- Establishing an action plan in case of injury or emergency

Workplace Hazard Awareness Checklist⁴

Early awareness of potential hazards in the workplace can help prevent work-related injuries. Use the checklist below to stay aware of the potential hazards involved in your food service workplace!

Burn Prevalent Items

- Ovens/Broilers Grills/Stovetops
- Deep Fryers Microwave Ovens
- Coffee Makers

Where Cuts Occur

- Knives Power Slicers/Grinders
- Broken Glass Food Processors
- Box Cutters/Tools

Slips, Trips, and Falls

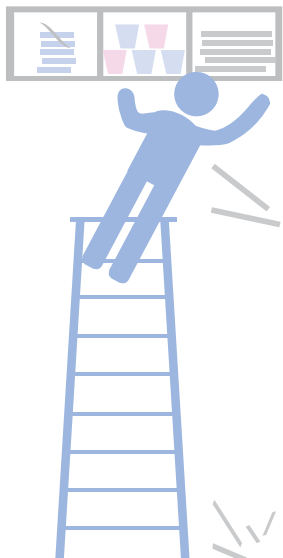
- Cords Clutter on Floors Slippery Floors
- Cluttered Exits Items in Climbing Reach

Ergonomic Issues

- Awkward Lifting Heavy Lifting
- Static Standing Repetitive Movements

Chemicals & Toxicants

- Dishwashing Products
- Cleaning Products Pesticides
- Proper Ventilation



1. Suzman, Michael S. et al. "Major Burn Injuries Among Restaurant Workers in New York City." Burn Prevention Forum. New York, New York, 2001.

2. Jayaraman S, Dropkin J, Siby Salston LR, Markowitz S. 2011. Dangerous dining: health and safety in the New York City restaurant industry. J Occup Environ Med; 53:1418-1424.

3. Grawitch, Matthew J., Gottschalk, Melanie, and Munz, David C. 2006. "The Path to a Healthy Workplace: A Critical Review Linking Healthy Workplace Practices, Employee Well-being, and Organizational Improvements. Consulting Psychology Journal, Vol. 58, No. 3

4. This checklist was developed in part from: Terane, Suzanne, Crain, Tiffany. "A Menu for Protecting the Health and Safety of Restaurant Workers." Labor Occupational Health Program and Young Workers United. Berkeley, CA. 2011.



**Mount
Sinai**

Selikoff Centers for Occupational Health

The Mount Sinai Selikoff Centers for Occupational Health are dedicated to providing **cutting-edge clinical services** with a focus on **prevention** to keep workers **healthy** and their workplaces **safe**. Our physicians are leaders in the field of occupational medicine, providing care to injured and ill workers and retirees in the **New York City** and **Mid-Hudson Valley** regions.

Our **highly skilled** and **multilingual team** of physicians, nurse practitioners, industrial hygienists, ergonomists, and benefits specialists provide comprehensive **patient-centered** services. We also help employers evaluate the work environment and establish programs to advance the general health and well-being of their entire workforce.

Our **medical experts** and **outreach team** members visit organizations, unions, and employers to bring **quality training** and **education** programs to the communities serviced by our clinical centers.

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