

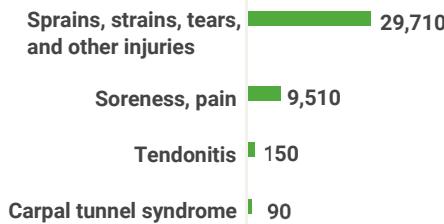
Healthcare and Social Assistance Industry Spotlight:

Hospitals Subsector

Injury Trends

According to **Injury Facts** and **BLS**, a high number of MSDs occur in the healthcare industry with **\$5.39 billion lost** in 2019 due to serious, nonfatal workplace injuries. In 2020, 41 MSD cases resulting in lost workdays were reported for every 10,000 workers in the healthcare and social assistance industry, while the hospital subsector saw 62 MSD cases resulting in lost workdays for every 10,000 workers[†]. Alarmingly, within the hospital subsector, there was a 17% increase in MSDs from 2019 to 2020.

2020 Hospitals MSDs



Hospitals MSD Rates*



[†]These numbers represent the number of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses involving days away from work within the U.S. and private industry according to **Injury Facts** and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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Potential Risks

The greatest MSD risk factors for healthcare professionals within hospitals are due to **manual patient handling**, such as:

- Patient lifting
- Patient transfer
- Patient repositioning
- Limb holding
- Catching a falling patient

Additional risks also include:

- Overexertion
- Task repetition
- Sustained/awkward postures
- Excessive reaching
- Forceful/excessive pinch grip activities
- Excessive temperatures from PPE
- Psychological fatigue
- Work hours per week

Potential Solutions

According to **NIOSH**, safe patient handling and mobility equipment, programs, and policies that limit manual lifting have shown to be effective in reducing MSDs in hospital staff. Additional solutions to reduce MSDs may include:

- Organizational support (e.g., ergonomic policies, proper lifting support & training, employee health & wellbeing initiatives, provision of resources for worker safety)
- Exoskeletons/exosuits
- Physical activity-based training and coaching (e.g., flexibility, strength training, endurance training)
- Ergonomic-based education and training

Key Takeaway

Employers are encouraged to use this resource to create a tailored MSD solution best suited for their organization. To limit the greatest amount of risk, double-check that your safe patient handling program limits or prohibits manual lifting. Implement technological solutions to eliminate manual patient handling where possible such as patient lifts, air-assisted transfer devices, or robotic wheelchairs. **Research** has shown these interventions are more effective when paired with organizational improvements, including increased leadership support, understanding of **staffing levels** and time pressures, and adequate training.

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