Repetitive Motion Injuries – Preventing Repetitive Motion Injuries Fatality File



RMI is a non-medical term that describes disorders related to performing repetitive tasks continuously, especially in an awkward or incorrect posture. Carpal tunnel syndrome occurs when tendons in the wrist become inflamed after being aggravated. Inflammation of tendons due to repetitious movement of the fingers causes tendonitis, mostly because of repetitive and forceful movements of the wrist and fingers during work.

Victims feel extreme pain even at the slightest movement of their hand. It usually begins with numbness or aching in the wrist, hand, or arm. In extreme cases, the neck and shoulders are affected.

RMI is not an infection, nor is it a communicable disease. It can happen to anyone, with women three times more likely to develop CTS than men. The risk highly increases with age (people between the ages of 40 and 60 are more commonly affected).

Cassandra Ward, records clerk for a major university hospital in Detroit, says: “My job was to file lab results into charts. I averaged 300 reports an hour, five nights a week. I started the job in May. By the end of July, I was having mild tingling in my wrist and slight weakness when I tried to grip small things with my right (dominant) hand. I ignored it.”

A 42-year-old single mother of two toddlers at the time, Cassandra took some over-the-counter painkillers to keep going. By the beginning of November, she could no longer hold anything in her right hand and was in constant pain. Cassandra was finally diagnosed with DeQuervains Tendonitis. “I was on workers’ compensation for three years until I could functionally use my hand again,” she said.