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Be safe and healthy on the job with these helpful tips provided by Peabody Insurance Agency

Caring for Your Hands

Ergonomic tips for kitchen staff

As a restaurant worker, your hands are involved in just about every task you perform, making them susceptible to over-use. Learn a few simple things you can do to avoid repetitive-motion injuries and help protect the most important tool in the kitchen—your hands.

What Causes Chronic Injuries?

The basic hazard that triggers injuries to the hands, wrists and fingers is repetitive motion, such as chopping and slicing for long periods. Doing repetitive tasks places additional stress on the body, making it more prone to chronic injuries, such as tendonitis and carpal tunnel syndrome.

Precautions

- Use knives that have smooth or padded handles, and are designed to keep your wrists straight. Also, use knives that have handles long enough so that they extend across your palm. All of these features provide additional comfort and will lessen the risk of pinching.
- When doing routine kitchen tasks, your hands and wrists should be in a neutral position, at an angle that's similar to

when shaking hands.

- It's important to adjust your work surface or body to a position that allows you to keep your wrists as straight as possible.
- Avoid muscle fatigue by shifting work between your two hands, and by varying your tasks. This limits the strain on your muscles and tendons, and reduces the temptation to flex or bend at the wrist.
- Stretch your arms and legs periodically throughout your shift to keep your muscles loose.
- Alternate between different activities throughout the day to vary your body movements.
- Always wear the proper gloves when handling high heat or frozen food items.

Let's Work Together

The well-being of our staff is a top priority. If you have concerns about repetitive motion tasks, talk with your shift manager so we can work together to create a work environment that is as enjoyable, safe and injury-free as possible.



In the Long Run

When you regularly use knives or other utensils, you are at an increased risk of tendonitis or carpal tunnel syndrome. When working, always look for way to reduce high-force activities and repetitive motions, and avoid working with bent wrists.



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