

The Ripple Effect





Today will be
talking about how a
hand or arm injury
can have a lasting
effect on your life



Industrial Safety and Hygiene News reported that hand injuries account for nearly 10% of hospital emergency department visits.

A series of 1,000 consecutive hand injuries showed the following distribution:
42% lacerations (cuts),
27% contusions (bruises),
17% fractures (broken bones),
and 5% infections.

Hand injuries account for about 17% all workday loss injuries.

What are some psychological side effects of a hand injury?



1. Hand related trauma patients show greater avoidance of returning to work at 6 months post trauma than those with non-work-related injuries
2. Appearance concerns and body image issues after hand trauma
3. Pain issues can cause sleep disturbances, panic attacks and mood swings
4. Depression and anxiety are also common following a hand injury as patients are unable to return to their employment and social lives

Let's Look At This Scenario

Stan is working on a machine when he forgets to put the guard back on one of the blades. His hand slips and two of his fingers are cut off. An ambulance is called and Stan is rushed to the hospital where they are able to re-attach one of his fingers.



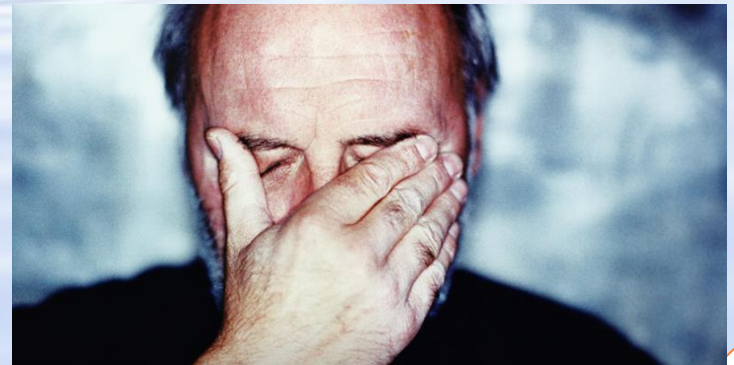
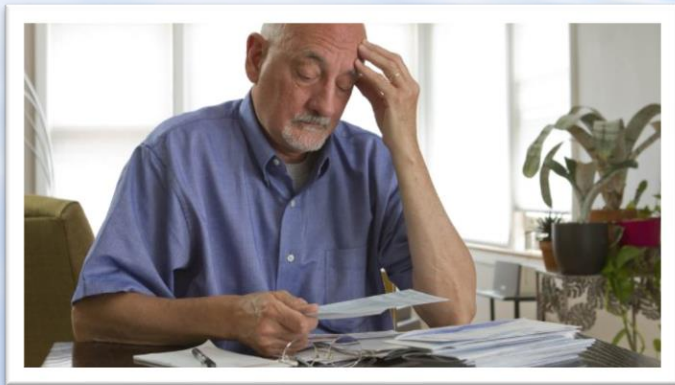
After six weeks, Stan's disability has run out and he needs to return to work. However, he has been having panic attacks about using the same machine where he lost his finger. Stan has been having nightmares, which has been disrupting his sleep patterns and concentration. Stan decides to start taking pain medication to help control the pain but he feels drowsy and out of it at work.



Back at work, Stan is struggling to keep up with his job. The missing finger has been slowing him down and he often finds that he constantly has to check to make sure the guard is down. After a couple weeks, Stan's boss tells him that they are going to move him into a different job. Stan has now been moved from Forman to housekeeping duties.



Stan misses hanging out his friends, but he struggles to do the activities he loved before he lost his finger. After another month, Stan decides to leave his job because he feels undervalued at this job. At home, Stan feels the financial stress as his wife is now the only person working. Soon, Stan is taking his pain meds all the time and sleeping all day.





Now, this may seem a bit crazy but an accident can ripple out and change your life in unexpected ways. It is difficult to fathom your life without all your limbs but it can happen.

PTSD after an injury can cause people to have flashbacks, anxiety, depression and even cause the onset of addictive behavior.



**Did you
know
that...**

After a hand injury.....

94% of patients had significant symptoms at some point early in rehabilitation, including nightmares (92%), flashbacks (88%), affective lability (84%), preoccupation with phantom limb sensations (13%), concentration/attention problems (12%), cosmetic concerns (10%), fear of death (5%), and denial of amputation (3%).

So, why does this matter?

If you are injured, you need to think more about more than just the injury. You will need to consider how this injury will affect your family, income and other interests.

What would you do for work?

Who would support your family?

How would you pay your bills?

What about maintain your hobbies?

The next time you consider not wearing your gloves or sleeves, make sure you take the time to think about how it may have a ripple on your life.



Gloves and sleeves are key to staying safe and being safe.