

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH BRANCH

# Occupational Health Watch: November 2018

### New Data on Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

More than 139,000 California workers suffered from carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) during 2007-2014, according to a California Department of Public Health (CDPH) study of state workers' compensation data reported in the October 5 Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



Industries with high rates of CTS include those that manufacture apparel, process food, and perform administrative work. Workers in these jobs are often required to perform forceful or repetitive tasks with their hands, or maintain an awkward posture. The rate of CTS was highest among persons aged 45–54 years, and the rate among women was more than 3 times higher than that among men.

Workplace changes that modify tasks, workstations, tools, and equipment can decrease ergonomic hazards and prevent injuries and illnesses, including CTS. The CDPH Occupational Health Branch has resources for employers and workers on its ergonomics topic page.

*Photo: Workers who process food have high rates of CTS.*

### Resources

Rates of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome in California, 2007–2014 – CDC MMWR

Ergonomics: Preventing Job-Related Pain – CDPH web page

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Email Occupational Health Watch (OHW@cdph.ca.gov) with feedback or change of address.

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