

## Hiding injuries hurts everyone involved

### Top reasons workers keep quiet and how they sabotage safety

You should always promptly report injuries to supervisors – no matter how minor they seem. There’s never a good excuse. More than 25% of construction workers said in a recent survey they’ve suffered an injury at some point and didn’t tell their boss.

There are myriad reasons workers keep injuries hidden – and none of them are good. Here are the top reasons and how they hurt both workers and companies:

#### Myth #1: “It’s only minor”

The top reason workers don’t report injuries is because they think they’re “minor” and “pain is part of the job,” according to the survey. But minor injuries – such as twisting your knee or tweaking your back – can become more serious conditions over time.

Under state laws, workers must report injuries within a certain period of time to be eligible for workers’ compensation benefits.

Your company may also prefer that you see a doctor or hospital that specializes in worker’s compensation injuries and coordinated with the company’s return-to-work program.

#### Myth #2 “I’ll lose my Job”

Workers may also not report injuries for fear of being labeled a complainer and losing future or current jobs. However, under federal law, workers have a right to report an injury or illness without fear of retaliation.

Workers also have a right, which is common across most states, to:

- File a workers’ compensation claim, and
- See a doctor for medical treatment.



## Myth # 3 “I’ll lose incentives”

The last excuse: Workers don’t want to lose out on safety incentives for no lost-time injuries. OSHA frowns upon safety incentive programs that discourage workers from reporting injuries. Your supervisor likely knows that OSHA would rather see incentive programs that encourage positive safety behaviors – not one that celebrate time without injuries.



Year after year, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that sprains and strains – usually to the back – are the most common workplace injury. Sprains and strains may seem minor at first, but they can get much worse over time. Here’s what you need to know:

- Don’t delay treatment. Don’t delay getting medical treatment. See your company doctor or, if you don’t have a one, your personal physician.
- Work with the doctor. Don’t miss medical appointments. If you do, the company may assume your injury isn’t serious.

When your doctor says you’ve reached a level of Maximum Medical improvement, he or she will give you a return-to-work form.