



## **Health & Productivity Management**

### **Workforce Tip –April 2009**

#### **What makes an injury or illness OSHA recordable?**

In the realm of workers compensation, recordability on the OSHA logs is an issue that is often scrutinized. The main consideration in determining whether an event is OSHA recordable is determining whether first aid or medical treatment was administered. OSHA is not concerned so much as to who gives the treatment, but they are concerned with the level of treatment provided. So, if an employee is sent to a clinic, treated by a physician but only first aid type treatment is given (i.e. an ice pack, etc.,) the incident would not be recordable. However, keep in mind that there are certain diagnoses (i.e. fracture, loss of consciousness and perforated ear drum) that are automatically recordable regardless of the treatment administered.

One of the most common issues affecting the determination is the use of prescription medicines. As an Occupational Medicine practice, we are well aware of this concern and whenever it is medically appropriate, an over-the-counter (OTC) medicine is considered as first line treatment. It is also important to keep in mind that other factors will influence the recordability even if the medical treatment consists of just OTC medicines. For example, a broken finger can be managed with OTC ibuprofen or Tylenol, but it will still be recordable because of the fracture diagnosis.

Job modification is another issue that affects recordability. This pertains to the ability of an employee to perform their routine job functions after the day of the injury. For example if an injured employee sits in the office or is sent home the remainder of the shift on the day of the injury, it does not make it recordable. However, if this same employee is still on temporary modified duty the next shift, it becomes recordable.

The following is a quick guide to determining OSHA recordability:

#### **Non Recordable/First Aid Treatment**

- Application of a bandage or an elastic bandage.
- Non prescription/OTC medicines
- Application of hot or cold compresses during the first visit
- Negative Xray diagnosis
- Tetanus booster (considered to be preventative)
- Burn treatment not requiring prescription meds or lost time/restrictions
- Removal of foreign bodies from eyes using irrigation
- Removal of foreign bodies from skin using tweezers or 'simple' methods
- Application of antiseptics during the first visit

#### **Recordable Conditions/Medical Treatment**

- Loss of consciousness
- Using sutures or skin adhesives (Dermabond) to close a laceration
- Prescription medications
- Modification/Restriction of work duties, lost workdays after the day of injury
- Removal of embedded foreign bodies from the eye.
- Admission to a hospital
- Burn treatment requiring prescription meds or modified work duties
- Positive Xray diagnosis (fractures/broken bones etc.)

Please contact us at 219-851-3827 if you would like to inquire about an onsite injury prevention analysis and risk report at your company.