## <u>eSafetyLine</u>

## **Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome affects the hands and wrists. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is the compression and entrapment of the median nerve that



|                                | passes through the wrist into the hand. This nerve is the main nerve that     |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Ergonomic Safety – Safety Talk | extends down the arm to the hand and provides the sense of touch in the       |
|                                | thumb, index finger, middle finger and half of the fourth finger. When        |
|                                | irritated, tendons swell and press against the nerve.                         |
| Attendance Roster              |   |
|                                | Symptoms are tingling, numbness, or severe pain in the wrist and hand.        |
|                                | This is often felt at night time. The increased pressure results in a lack of |
|                                | strength in the hand. There is an inability to make a fist, hold on to        |
|                                | objects, or perform manual tasks. If pressure continues the nerve may be      |
|                                | damaged. Permanent loss of sensation and partial paralysis may occur.         |
|                                | Carpal Tunnel Syndrome can be reduced by stopping or limiting the             |
|                                | activity that aggravates the tendons and nerve. If you do the same tasks      |
|                                | with your hands over and over, try not to bend, extend or twist your          |
|                                | hands for long periods. Don't work with your arms too close or too far        |
|                                | from your body. Don't rest your wrists on hard surfaces for long periods.     |
|                                | Switch hands during work tasks. Make sure your tools fit your hands           |
|                                | properly. Take regular breaks from repeated hand movements to give            |
|                                | your hands and wrists time to rest. Don't sit or stand in the same position   |
|                                | all day. Finally, if you frequently use a keyboard, adjust the height of you  |
|                                | chair so that your forearms are level with your keyboard and you don't        |
|                                | have to flex your wrists to type.   |
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|                                | Discussion Questions  |
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|                                | What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and how does it occur?                         |
|                                | What tasks performed in the workplace could lead to Carpal Tunnel             |
|                                | Syndrome? Describe specific actions that can be taken to prevent Carpal       |
|                                | Tunnel Syndrome.  |