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INCIDENT ALERT

A project manager was meeting with his supervisor discussing a project. The project manager had been sitting with his legs crossed. As he rose to leave the office he fell, spraining his ankle. He was transported to a nearby emergency room where he was examined and released return to work.

LESSONS LEARNED

Many of us sit with our legs crossed. This can result in restricted blood flow and nerve entrapment, either of which may result in the sensation of our legs falling asleep. The medical term for these altered feelings of the limbs is paresthesia. Although paresthesia’s can happen at any time, they seem most typical at rest such as sitting, driving or particularly sleeping. Usually, but not always, numbness and tingling of an arm or leg is representative of a type of neuropathy or nerve entrapment. This was apparently what happened, contributing to this injury.

This sprain resulted in a fall. Falls, both from elevation and at the same level, are one of the most dangerous incidents that occur in construction, accounting for more than 30,000 injuries and 420 deaths nationwide, according to the latest Bureau of Labor Statistics information. The Project Manager could easily have suffered a broken bone or concussion as a result of the fall. Though at first glance this may have seemed to be a minor event, it is important for us all to recognize that any injury must be looked into in order to find ways to prevent them.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Keep in mind that injuries can occur anywhere, at any time. After sitting for extended periods of time it is a good idea to take “inventory” prior to standing. Take a few seconds and do a quick mental check of your condition. After you rise, take a moment to stretch. This helps with blood circulation and can assist you in maintaining your balance.

2. Try to change positions often if you are in an extended meeting. Stand or walk around if needed. Doctors recommend that when people need to sit for extended periods of time they not cross their legs above the ankle.

3. Share this Incident Alert with your contractor and ask them to share it with their workers.

Distribution:
All CPO Staff