

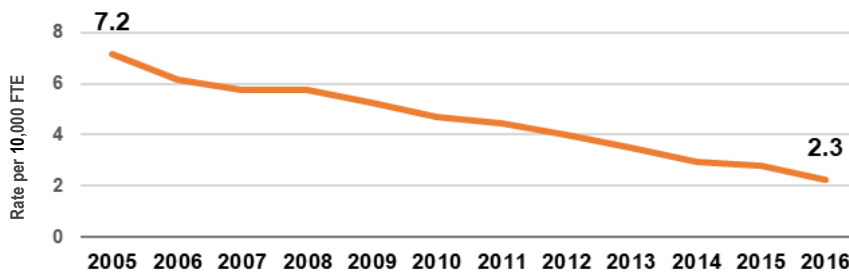


Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WMSDs) are caused by using high force, repetitive movements, awkward postures, or too much vibration on the job.

WMSDs can be painful, debilitating, and lead to lost work time. In Washington, 40% of compensable workers' compensation claims are for WMSDs.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a type of WMSD caused by a pinched nerve at the wrist. Symptoms include pain, tingling, weakness and numbness in the hand or wrist.

CTS claim rates have decreased by two-thirds since 2005.



The **majority** (55%) of CTS claimants were **women**.

These job activities caused 73% of CTS claims:

Typing



Repetitive use of tools



Repetitive motion



CTS claims are costly:

- Have a median claim cost of over \$17,000 per claim.
- Result in a median of 100 days of time loss per claim.

Types of work with high rates of CTS claims:

- Meat and Poultry Processing and Manufacturing
- Plastics or Textile Manufacturing
- Concrete Work
- Building Construction
- Barbers, Beauty, or Tanning Parlors

WMSDs like CTS can develop over time. The intensity of a task, how long it takes, and how often it is done are important factors to consider when protecting workers from WMSDs. Employers should:

- Train workers how to avoid or eliminate hazardous motions or postures.
 - Keep wrists straight when using tools or typing.
 - Avoid forceful, repetitive motions with wrist in flexed or curled position.
 - Take frequent breaks.
 - Alternate tasks.
- Encourage workers to see a medical provider if they have symptoms. Early treatment leads to faster recovery and better outcomes.
- Have an ergonomist or safety & health specialist evaluate demanding tasks. *L&I offers free consultations.*

▪ Data source: Washington State Department of Labor & Industries workers' compensation data, 2005–2016; compensable State Fund and self-insured claims included. Compensable claims involve wage replacement for lost work time (four or more days), total permanent disability, fatality, or a worker kept on salary by the employer during disability.

▪ Claim costs presented here are underestimates, costs and days are calculated based on what was paid as of May 2019 and are only available for State Fund claims. Costs include medical costs and wage replacement.

▪ FTE= full time equivalent employee. 1 FTE=2,000 hours worked in a year.