

# **NIEHS Injuries and Illnesses**

**For**

**Fiscal Year 2003**

Health and Safety Branch  
Office of Management  
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences  
Research Triangle Park, North Carolina

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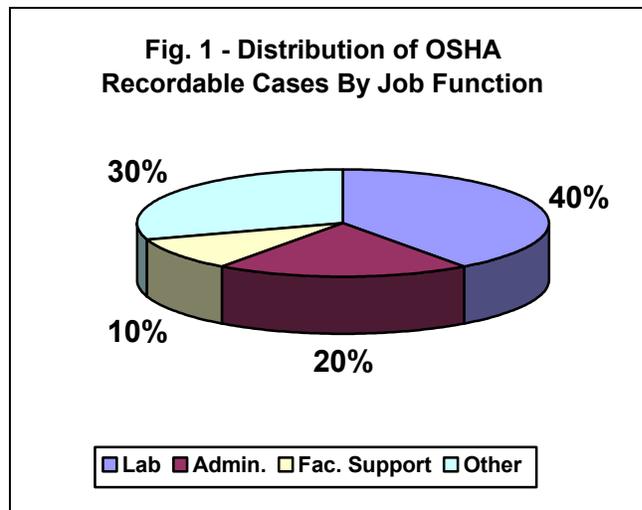


## NIEHS FY2003 Injuries and Illnesses

- **During FY2003, there were 1.4 injuries and illnesses sustained for each 100 FTE's. This incidence rate represents a decrease over the FY2002 rate (2.1).**

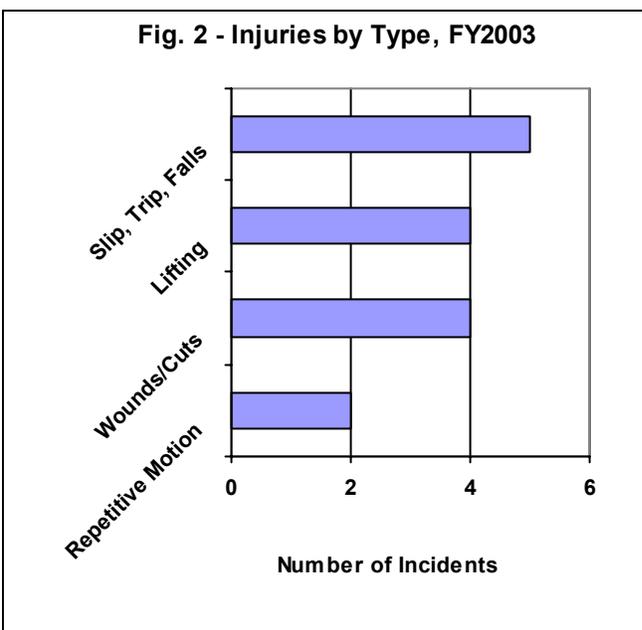
NIEHS injury rates compare favorably with other occupational sectors:

- Federal government (not including USPS) -- 3.79 (FY2002);
  - US Department of Health and Human Services -- 2.28 (FY2002);
  - National Institutes of Health -- 1.79 (FY2002);
  - North Carolina private industry -- 4.8 (CY2001); and
  - NC state government -- 4.2 (CY2001)
- **There were 10 OSHA recordable<sup>1</sup> cases during FY2003.** The distribution of these cases by major job function (laboratory, administrative, facility support) is shown in Figure 1. "Other" includes activities such as walking to/from parking lots and engaging in on-site fitness activities.



**There were two lost workday (LWD) cases during FY2003 resulting in 41 lost workdays.**

The overall FY2003 LWD case rate was 0.3 cases/100 FTEs and represents the sixth consecutive year that the LWD rate has been at 0.3. There were no lost workday injuries among personnel performing laboratory research tasks. Over the last ten years, NIEHS has averaged 2.7 LWD cases and 58.6 lost workdays per year.



- **The most frequently reported injuries during FY2003 were slip-trip-fall incidents resulting in muscle strains, ligament sprains, and bruises or contusions.** In many of these cases, injury to the knee or ankle was involved. Other common injuries included injuries resulting from physical exertion (e.g. lifting) and wounds from contact with sharp objects (e.g. glass). There were two cases of musculoskeletal injury from repetitive motion tasks (e.g., pipetting and keyboard operation).

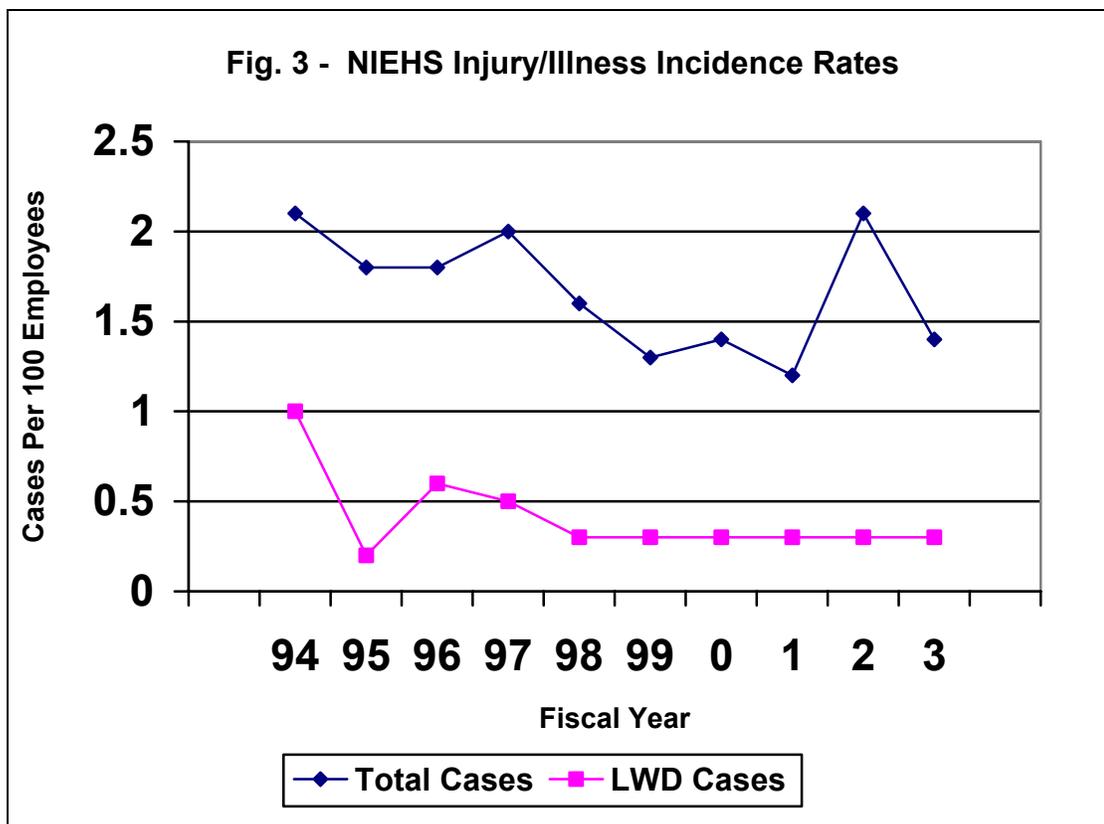
<sup>1</sup> "OSHA recordable" cases are defined as those involving medical treatment beyond first aid, lost work time beyond day of injury, job change, or loss of consciousness.

- Slips and trips on walking/working surfaces accounted for 33% of all incidents. In two of the cases, uneven surfaces were contributing factors, involving a sidewalk surface at the NIH Main Campus in Bethesda and an elevator that did not stop level with the floor. Poor illumination was a contributing factor in a third incident that occurred during a localized power outage in NIEHS leased office space.
- The two incidents of repetitive motion injuries involved research staff performing keyboard operation and pipetting tasks. Typically, repetitive motion injuries develop over time and result from stress on muscles and joints, inflammation of tendons, pinched nerves and/or restricted blood flow. The Health and Safety Branch has developed a “Health and Safety Guide to Laboratory Ergonomics” to help reduce repetitive motion injuries and awkward postures in the laboratory environment by incorporating some simple ergonomic principles (<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/odhsb/ergoguid/home.htm>).
- There were three injuries sustained while employees engaged in on-campus fitness or exercise activities (slip on the new outdoor basketball court; twisted ankle while jumping rope; lifting weights in the fitness room). Two of these incidents were OSHA recordable injuries, one of which resulted in 10 lost workdays.
- OSHA is in the process of proposing new procedures for the recording of federal employee occupational injuries and illnesses in 2004. Although details have not been released, OSHA would direct Federal Agencies to use the same recording procedures that apply to private industry, instead of using workers’ compensation data. Under the procedures and definitions used for private industry, certain types of incidents (e.g., fitness activities) that may be compensable would no longer be recorded as occupational injuries.

**Table 1**  
NIEHS Injuries and Illnesses by Program Area, FY2003

Division	Lab/Branch	OSHA Recordable Cases		
		No. Cases	Lost Work Day Cases	No. Lost Work Days
OM	AMB	1	---	---
	FEB	2	1	31
DIR	OSD/NCT	1	---	---
	LMC	1	---	---
	LMG	1	---	---
	LMT	2	1	10
	LPC	1	---	---
	LPP	1	---	---
<b>Totals</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>41</b>

Note: OSHA Recordable Cases include those involving medical treatment beyond one-time first aid, lost work time beyond the day of injury, job change, or loss of consciousness.



**Table 2**  
 NIEHS Injury / Illness Incidence Rates (Cases per 100 Employees) and  
 Number of Lost Workday Cases; Fiscal Years 1994 -- 2003

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Total Injury &amp; Illness Rate</b>	<b>Lost Workday Case Rate</b>	<b>No. of Lost Workday Cases</b>	<b>No. of Lost Workdays</b>
1994	2.1	1.0	7	82
1995	1.8	0.2	1	21
1996	1.8	0.6	4	55
1997	2.0	0.5	3	254
1998	1.6	0.3	2	6
1999	1.3	0.3	2	50
2000	1.4	0.3	2	5
2001	1.2	0.3	2	35
2002	2.1	0.3	2	37
<b>2003</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>41</b>
Ten Year Average	1.7	0.4	2.7	58.6

**Table 3**  
**Number of NIEHS Injuries by Type of Injury, FY2003**  
 Including All OSHA Recordable Injuries and Non-Recordable Incidents

<b>Type of Injury</b>	<b>Laboratory</b>	<b>Support Operations</b>	<b>Administrative And Other</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Laceration; Abrasion; Puncture	3	---	---	3
Contusion; Bruise	---	---	1	1
Strain; Sprain	3	1	6	10
Fracture	---	---	---	0
Chemical Irritation; Burn	---	---	---	0
Animal Bite	1	---	---	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>

**Table 4**  
**Number of NIEHS Injuries by Anatomical Location of Injury, FY2003**  
 Including All OSHA Recordable Injuries and Non-Recordable Incidents

<b>Anatomical Location of Injury</b>	<b>Laboratory</b>	<b>Support Operations</b>	<b>Administrative And Other</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Head/Neck	1			1
Eyes				
Trunk/Torso				
Back	1	1	2	4
Shoulder			1	1
Arm/Elbow	2		2	4
Hand/Wrist	2			2
Finger	3			3
Hip				
Leg/Thigh			1	1
Knee		1	1	2
Ankle			2	2
Foot/Toe				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20</b>

*Laboratory* -- Laboratory and animal handling/care taking activities

*Support Operations* -- Activities involving facility maintenance, warehousing, waste management, etc.

*Administrative* -- Office, managerial, and clerical activities

*Other* -- Other activities, e.g., walking to/from parking lots, on-site fitness activities, etc.

OSHA 200 LOG OF INJURIES AND ILLNESSES  
NIEHS -- FISCAL YEAR 2003

2003-Dec-22

Period: 2002-Oct-01 to 2003-Sep-30

<b>Date of Incident</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>NIEHS Lab/ Branch</b>	<b>Nature of Injury</b>	<b>Body Part</b>	<b>Days Absent</b>
2002-Nov-27	BIOLOGIST	DIR\LEP	Wound - Laceration	Arm, Hand	
*2002-Dec-09	PROCUREMENT TECHNICIAN	OM\AMB	Musculoskeletal Trauma - Strain/Sprain	Shoulder, Arm	
2002-Dec-18	SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW	DIR\LMT	Wound - Laceration	Finger	
*2003-Jan-29	ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNICIAN	DIR\LMC	Musculoskeletal Trauma - Bruise/Contusion	Arm, Knee	
2003-Feb-11	CONTRACT SPECIALIST	DERTRCB	Musculoskeletal Trauma - Strain/Sprain	Leg, Ankle	
*2003-Feb-24	BIOLOGIST	DIR\LMT	Other - Tendonitis In Right Arm	Arm, Hand	
*2003-Mar-04	VISITNG FELLOW	DIR\LPC	Wound - Bite	Finger	
*2003-Apr-23	BIOLOGIST	DIR\LMG	Musculoskeletal Trauma - Strain/Sprain	Neck, Arm, Hand	
*2003-Apr-24	ELECTRICIAN	OM\FEB	Musculoskeletal Trauma - Strain/Sprain	Knee	
*2003-May-01	ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	DIR\LMT	Musculoskeletal Trauma - Strain/Sprain	Ankle	10
2003-Jun-16	SUMER IRTA	DIR\LPC	Wound - Puncture (needle, pipette)	Thumb	
*2003-Jun-26	PIPEFITTER	OM\FEB	Musculoskeletal Trauma - Strain/Sprain	Back	31
*2003-Jul-23	ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNICIAN	DIR\LPP	Musculoskeletal Trauma - Strain/Sprain	Back	
2003-Aug-30	ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNICIAN	DIR\LST	Musculoskeletal Trauma - Strain/Sprain	Back	
*2003-Sep-08	BIOLOGIST	DIR\OSD	Musculoskeletal Trauma - Strain/Sprain	Back	

\* - OSHA Recordable Cases