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Risk-Free DIY: How to Protect Your Health

Anyone renovating their home should be well prepared. Many DIY accidents can be prevented by taking simple precautions.

DIY Projects: Fun, Creative—and Sometimes Risky. Here's How to Stay Safe

In just twelve minutes, dowels disappear into pre-drilled holes, boards are sanded, painted, and then magically lined up on the wall: the DIY headboard is complete. Many of the DIY videos found online or on social media under the "DIY" (do it yourself) banner look something like this—quick, easy, and satisfying.



DIY is more than just a trend; it's a way for people to take projects into their own hands, express creativity, and save money. But while the fun and satisfaction are undeniable, safety should always be the top priority. "In addition to good tools, quality materials, and personal protective equipment, well-fitting clothing is also essential," says Susanne

Woelk, executive director of the Safe House campaign.

Four Essential Safety Tips for DIYers

1. **Dress for Safety:** Wide sleeves or loose jacket ends can easily get caught in machinery. Clothing should be tight-fitting but still allow freedom of movement. To better protect your skin, avoid short sleeves or short trouser legs.
2. **Remove Jewelry:** Necklaces, bracelets, and large earrings can get caught on tools or materials. "It's better to remove them before starting your work," advises Woelk. This prevents accidents and even the risk of strangulation.
3. **Secure Long Hair:** If you have long hair, tie it back in a braid and pin it up, or use a hairnet. This simple step can prevent hair from getting caught in machinery.
4. **Use Protective Gear:** Wear gloves and safety goggles when necessary. Hearing protection is also recommended when working with loud machinery.

Potential Dangers of DIY

Despite the satisfaction of a job well done, DIY projects can lead to injuries. Sawed fingers, crushed thumbs, or twisted wrists are not uncommon, says trauma surgeon Thomas Brockamp. "It becomes particularly critical when nerves are affected, untreated wounds become infected, or deeper injuries go



undetected for a long time,” he warns.

Brockamp recommends using special protective gloves, especially when sawing, as standard models can easily get caught in the chainring. Extra caution is needed when using unfamiliar machines or borrowed equipment. And if an accident does occur, even if it seems minor, it’s wise to have it checked by a doctor.

In Case of Emergency

If an accident happens during a DIY project, don’t hesitate—call emergency services immediately at 9112.

DIY can be a rewarding and enjoyable hobby, but only if you put safety first. With the right precautions, you can ensure your next project is both successful and injury-free

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Health Series - Calendar: All 40 Weeks of Pregnancy - week 23

The baby in your belly still looks a bit wrinkled. But it's gaining weight rapidly from now on. Also: Preventing vaginal infections

Weeks 23 of Pregnancy

Do you sometimes feel a rhythmic pounding in your stomach? You might be feeling your baby's hiccups. This is a common experience during pregnancy: your baby is practicing breathing by letting amniotic fluid flow into their lungs and back out again. "They often choke because their diaphragm isn't fully developed yet," explains Dr. Mirja Pagenkemper, a researcher in prenatal imprinting with the PRINCE (Prenatal Identification of Children's Health) study. Hiccups are a natural reflex caused by

sudden contractions of the diaphragm, though their exact purpose remains a mystery.

Baby's Development

At the start of the 23rd week of pregnancy, unborn babies weigh about 500 grams on average. They still appear a bit thin, with wrinkled skin due to a lack of fatty tissue. However, from this week onward, most babies begin to gain weight rapidly.

Around the end of this week, your baby will start to experience cycles of sleep and wakefulness. Many mothers notice that their little one is especially active when they themselves are trying to rest—sometimes even losing sleep because of it. "Perhaps most women simply feel the movements more strongly when they themselves are resting," says Dr. Pagenkemper.



Another milestone: your baby will now experience rapid eye movements, a sign of the REM sleep phase. In adults, REM is associated with dreaming and deep rest.

The Mother’s Health: What to Watch For
Pregnant women are particularly susceptible to bacterial vaginal infections, which can trigger miscarriage or premature birth. Early detection is crucial. That’s why doctors measure the vaginal pH level during prenatal visits. If you wish, you can also monitor your pH at home using a special glove from the pharmacy. If your pH is elevated, see your doctor—they will check for infection and recommend next steps.

Nutrition is also key. Both you and your baby need plenty of calcium for strong bones. Calcium deficiency can lead to osteoporosis, making bones brittle. Good sources include milk, yogurt, and

broccoli. Why not start your day with a power muesli made with fresh fruit and dairy? It’s tasty and energizing.

Tip: Pregnant Women Often Have Priority

Long waits at government offices can be exhausting, especially for expectant mothers. The good news: pregnant women often receive priority at government agencies and public offices. Sometimes, signs in the waiting area will indicate this. As your pregnancy progresses, many people will offer to let you go first. If not, don’t hesitate to mention your pregnancy and ask for priority service.

Pregnancy is a time of rapid change and new experiences—for both you and your baby. With a little knowledge and self-care, you can navigate these weeks with confidence and peace of mind.

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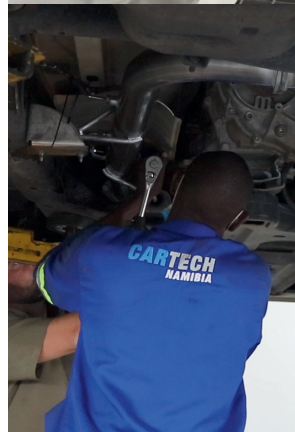
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Health & Safety - Are Your Emergency Fixtures Safe to Use?

Understanding the hidden risks of poor maintenance, and how to prevent them through proper care.

In any industrial work setting where chemical or physical hazards are present, immediate access to emergency drench showers and eye/face wash units is absolutely essential. However, if these safety fixtures aren't properly maintained, these lifesaving devices can quickly become safety hazards themselves. A poorly maintained emergency shower or eyewash station is vulnerable to contamination or malfunction when needed most—potentially worsening an injury instead of preventing it. Unchecked units can also become breeding grounds for bacteria and sediment, risking infection and putting both workers and businesses in jeopardy.

The Hazards of Poor Maintenance

Contamination:

Rarely used or tested emergency fixtures often contain stagnant or untreated water, which is more likely to harbor bacteria and minerals. If an eyewash station is not properly maintained, contaminated water can come into contact with the eyes, skin, or even be inhaled. Exposure to such water can lead to serious health complications, including respiratory or eye infections.



Water Temperature Harm:

Exposure to extreme water temperatures—either too hot or too cold—can cause further injury or shock. According to DIN EN 15154-1/2, the recommended water temperature for emergency fixtures is between 15.6°C and 37.8°C (60°F to 100°F). This range is comfortable for users and encourages the full 15-minute flush required for effective decontamination.

Clogged or Malfunctioning Spray Heads:

Dust, debris, and mineral buildup can block eyewash nozzles or showerheads, reducing water flow and the ability to remove hazardous substances. In emergencies, low water pressure or uneven spray patterns can prevent proper flushing, increasing the risk of prolonged chemical exposure.

Obstructed Access:

Even the best-maintained fixture is useless if it's blocked by equipment,





boxes, or machinery. DIN standards require that emergency fixtures be within a 10-second reach (about 16 meters) of hazardous areas and always accessible. In an emergency, every second counts—obstructions can delay critical first aid.

Corroded or Broken Parts:

Like any plumbing fixture, eyewash stations and showers are subject to wear and tear. Corroded pipes, broken spray heads, or damaged hoses can prevent the fixture from delivering the DIN-required 15-minute continuous flow of water. Regular checks are essential to ensure reliability.

Neglecting regular maintenance not only endangers workers but can also lead to financial and legal consequences. German regulations (such as the Betriebssicherheitsverordnung and DIN EN 15154) require regular inspection and testing of emergency fixtures. Non-compliance can result in fines, lawsuits, and reputational damage.

Guidelines for Testing and Cleaning **Weekly Testing and Activation:**

- **Flush the System:** Activate the eye/face wash long enough to clear stagnant water and debris.
- **Examine Spray Heads:** Ensure all heads are activated and functioning.
- **Inspect for Corrosion, Leaks, or Damage:** Check pipes and hoses for leaks or damage.
- **Check Water Condition:** Water should be clear and odor-free.

Monthly Inspection:

- **Ensure Tepid Water Availability:** Water temperature should remain within the DIN-specified range.
- **Inspect for Leaks, Rust, or Damage:** Address any issues immediately.
- **Activate the Fixture:** Confirm that handles or foot pedals work properly.

Annual Inspection and Maintenance:

1. **Conduct a Full DIN Compliance Audit:** Ensure the unit meets all flow rate, temperature, and accessibility requirements.
2. **Replace Worn Components:** Change



out damaged spray heads, valves, or hoses.

3. **Check Station Placement:** Confirm units are within a 10-second reach (16 meters) of hazardous areas and are not obstructed.

Recommendations for Long-Term Maintenance

Select Hygienic Eyewash Models:

Modern eye/face wash units with self-draining designs eliminate stagnant water. Look for models with separate supply and waste pipes to prevent cross-contamination, and covers to shield the bowl from misuse and contamination.

Install Reliable Water Heating Solutions:

- **Thermostatic Mixing Valves (TMVs):** These blend hot and cold water to deliver a consistent temperature, automatically adjusting to supply fluctuations. Look for models that

maintain output within $\pm 1.7^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($\pm 3^{\circ}\text{F}$) and provide cold-water bypass for safety.

- **Tankless Water Heaters:** These provide unlimited water at a set temperature, reaching DIN standards for tepid water in 20–30 seconds, with minimal pressure drop (as low as 0.55 bar/8 psi).

Conduct Periodic Job Site Evaluations:

Reference DIN EN 15154 and safety data sheets (SDS) during site walk-throughs to ensure proper installation, testing, and maintenance. Some manufacturers offer complimentary site surveys to check compliance and equipment placement.

Prioritize Documentation:

Maintain a log of weekly inspections, maintenance, and any incidents involving the equipment. Use inspection tags and dated checklists to ensure accountability



and regulatory compliance.

Regular maintenance of emergency showers and eyewash stations is not just a regulatory requirement—it’s a critical part of workplace safety. Poor upkeep can turn lifesaving equipment into a hazard. Facility managers should routinely inspect and maintain these fixtures to ensure they function correctly and comply with DIN standards.

Need help ensuring your emergency fixtures are up to standard? OSH-Med international (www.osh-med.pro) offers expert support for companies facing health and safety challenges. From compliance audits to maintenance and staff training, OSH-Med international helps you protect your team and your business.

Don’t wait for an emergency to discover a problem—make safety a priority today!

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Fun Time - *Joke of the week*



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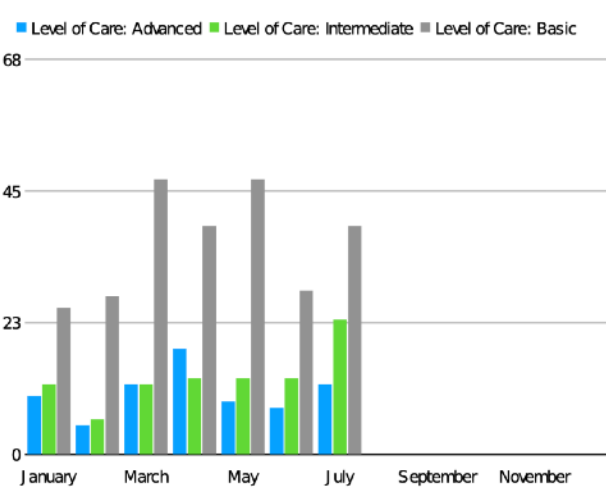
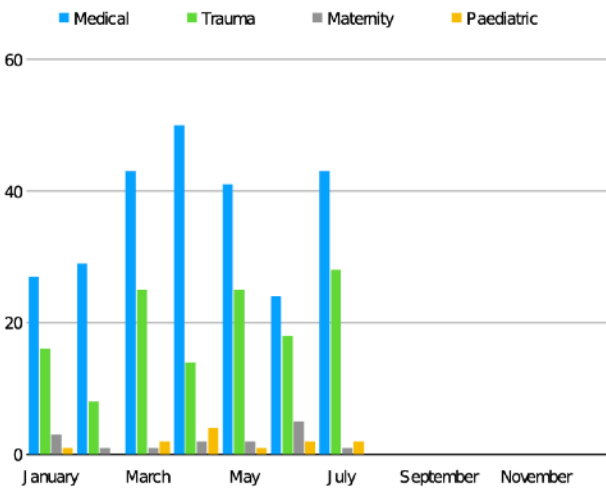
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February	29	8	1	0	5	6	27
March	43	25	1	2	12	12	47
April	50	14	2	4	18	13	39
May	41	25	2	1	9	13	47
June	24	18	5	2	8	13	28
July	43	28	1	2	12	23	39
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September							
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- **What** kind of injuries?
- **How many** injured person
- **Waiting** for further question

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