



We don't just make ice cleats, we make slips and falls disappear.™

WHY ICE CLEATS ALONE WILL NOT ELIMINATE YOUR SLIPS AND FALLS



Winter Walking

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Proud Member



If you are getting ready to purchase ice cleats for your organization and expecting to eliminate all of your slips and falls, you may be disappointed in the results. Assuming that you've selected the right products for your organization, it's entirely possible to drastically reduce your winter-time slips and falls on ice and snow. But if you're intent on charting a course to zero, there's a crucial element to any successful slip and fall program that often gets overlooked; Communication and training.

Every year countless organizations set out to conquer slips and falls by making ice cleats available to their employees. Perhaps a fair amount of time was spent combing through the marketplace researching and selecting what appeared to be the most suitable products for their organization. In the end, the belief is that with the availability of these items they've done everything that was necessary to combat winter-time slips and falls.



When the snow finally thaws and spring rolls around many of these same organizations find themselves deflated by the outcome. After enduring months of employee complaints about sizing, durability and overall effectiveness of the items they discover that a good portion of the company wasn't even aware of the initiative at all. Then the worst part is the discovery that accident rates were only marginally affected by the initiative.

By design, ice cleats and other types of traction devices can be your number one weapon against slips and falls on ice and snow. But without proper communication and training these products will not solve your problem, they'll actually exacerbate the situation in terms of management headaches.



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Below is a breakdown of the communication and training elements that should be initiated with your slip and fall program:

COMMUNICATION

Communicate what's available:

You've invested time and money in selecting and purchasing ice cleats. The easiest way for the program to fail is for a portion of your organization to be left out in the cold and unaware of the initiative. Consider a company-wide internal advertising campaign to let everyone know that items will be available for their use this winter. This initiative needs to be a repeatable process throughout the winter, year over year.

Communicate which items are for which job tasks or departments:

Assuming that you're planning to purchase more than one type of item (necessary for large organizations with varying job functions), it's important to let everyone in your company know which products are right for them and which are not.

A good idea is to create a master document featuring all of the items available that details which job functions should use which items. Consider circulating this document throughout your organization multiple times throughout the winter months.



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Communicate how to obtain the items:

Whether your employees are supposed to order items direct from the supplier or requisition them from a storeroom, it should be clearly communicated in advance of the change in weather. Consider adding stock numbers, storeroom locations and/or supplier contact details to a master document as introduced above.

Communicate where to find the appropriate training for each item:

No matter which item your employee selects it's vital that they are educated in the proper way to use the item. Make sure that your employees are aware not only that this training exists, but where to find the training information.

TRAINING

Overall:

Training your employees properly will help them understand why specific devices have been chosen for their job. The training information should be standardized and uniform throughout the organization.

Train your employees on what the product is intended to do:

Naturally the items that are being made available are intended to reduce slips and falls, but that doesn't mean that your crews should suddenly walk around with the confidence of a superhero. Most traction aids are just that, an aid not a guarantee. It's imperative to use utmost caution when walking in these types of devices. Your employees should know that at the outset. Consider making this type of information available in a visual aid that can be circulated and posted company wide.



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Train your employees on how to use the item properly:

Can the item be worn indoors? Can you wear it while driving? Is there a certain way to adjust it on the foot, or is there a replaceable part that needs to be installed? If you've spent any amount of time selecting the proper items for your employees you've noticed that not all traction devices are the same. It's necessary that your employees understand how to use the items that you're offering properly or you risk having wasted the money on the purchase. Again, consider posting a visual training aid or producing a brief video for each item specifically showing the particulars of each device.

Train your employees on how to know when it's time to replace the product:

One of the most dangerous scenarios is an employee wearing a traction device with worn out traction. The false sense of confidence from having the product on is a surefire recipe for a workplace slip and fall.

Ice cleats and other traction devices are consumable goods. You can expect to get anywhere from several months to several years or longer from an item depending upon the amount of usage and the aggressiveness of the use. But regardless, all items will eventually degrade to the point that they are not doing what they were intended to – reduce slips and falls.



Your employees must be able to identify when a product has reached the end of its useful life and know when it's time to replace that item. And this last part can't be said enough: It's vitally important the item is replaced immediately. Wearing traction items is like using soap, it's only as good as the day you use it. You can wash yourself for 364 days, but if the bar of



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soap runs out on the last day of the year you are destined to stink. Similarly, it doesn't matter how many days in the past you've worn your ice cleats if you don't have them on today and you hit a patch of ice – big trouble can be expected.

The goal of all of this communication and training is that you'll have helped raise the overall corporate consciousness regarding the risk of slips and falls. There's no hard evidence on this, but many organization believe that purely the act of their employees putting on these items each day decreases the injury rate in their organization.

To summarize, while ice cleats and traction devices can have a dramatic affect on the amount of slips and falls on ice and snow, these items alone will not solve the problem. To maximize the effect of these items and attain a path to zero slips and falls you must surround the products with effective companywide communication and training. Making sure that your employees are in the loop and properly educated will help you to make these accidents disappear.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THOUGHT, CLICK BELOW TO RATE THE QUALITY OF THIS CONTENT.



Winter Walking provides slip and fall awareness resources through our Safety Partner Program. When you work with Winter Walking, your slips and falls become our slips and falls and we won't stop until they disappear. Don't wait until winter to start preparing, [learn how Winter Walking can start reducing your company's slip and fall accidents today.](#)



**CLICK HERE TO START YOUR FREE SLIP AND FALL RISK ANALYSIS
WITH ONE OF OUR TRACTION SAFETY EXPERTS.**