Slip, trip and fall injuries on the rise

The number of injuries related to slip, trip and fall incidents is on the rise this fiscal year, with 66 slip and fall injuries projected by UC Davis Health System's Workers' Compensation unit.

This would be more than a 29 percent increase when compared to the 2010/2011 fiscal year, when slip and fall injuries decreased by 20 percent from the year before.

Work-related slip, trip and fall accidents can frequently result in serious debilitating injuries that can impact an employee's ability to do his or her job, often resulting in:

- Lost workdays
- Reduced productivity
- Expensive workers' compensation claims
- Diminished ability to care for patients

"We need to turn this injury trend around," said Hugh Parker, manager of the Workers' Compensation unit. "Slips and falls are a major safety concern at the health system and most of these work-related injuries are preventable."

Slip, trip and fall injuries are occurring across the health system -- not in any particular department or operational area. However, wet and slippery surfaces are most frequently the cause of these workplace injuries.

"The key to reducing the number of incidents is by raising staff awareness and minimizing hazards," said workplace safety specialist Ajay Tejpal. The following are tips for reducing slip, trip and fall injuries:

- Wear footwear suitable for work and weather conditions
- Be aware of your environment
- Use umbrella bags and floor mats at entry points to reduce water on floors
- Carry and use a flashlight to easily identify changes in sidewalk elevation, puddles or leaves
- Avoid using cell phones and texting while walking
- Post "wet floor" cones and don't walk around wet areas. Contact Environmental Services immediately at 916-734-3777 to clean up major spills.
- For more helpful tips, download "Slip, Trip and Fall Prevention for Health-care Workers".