Seven Statistics on Aging Workers



More people are working later in life today, for financial or personal reasons. Here are seven statistics relating to older workers and some of the age-related safety and health challenges they face.

1. Seven signs of aging that can begin to affect workers as young as 40 are reduced physical strength and range of joint movement; reduced breathing capacity; poorer posture and balance; sleeping disorders; reduced ability to regulate body temperature; vision problems; and hearing loss.
2. By 2021, nearly 25 percent of Canadian workers will be 55 or older. (Statistics Canada)
3. On average, people lose 15 to 20 percent of their strength between the ages of 20 and 60. (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety)
4. In the United States in 2011, 77 percent of workers aged 55 and older held full-time employment, while 23 percent worked part-time. (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
5. In 2013, American workers aged 65 and older had the lowest incidence of non-fatal injuries and illnesses, at 89 cases per 10,000 full-time workers. However, they required the longest time away from work to recover from injuries or illnesses—a median 14 days. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
6. Older workers are 3 times more likely to suffer a fracture or severe fall compared to younger workers. (University of British Columbia study)
7. The 3 most commonly reported injuries among older workers are same-level falls, overexertion and contact with objects or equipment.

For a variety of reasons, including financial inability to retire and the need to stay socially active and have a sense of purpose, people are working later in life today. Older workers, generally categorized as being 55 and older, bring a wealth of experience to the workplace, although there are some challenges that come with aging. Here are seven statistics on older workers: