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TRANSIENT RISK FACTORS FOR SLIPPING IN LIMITED-SERVICE RESTAURANTS – A CASE-CROSSOVER STUDY

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This study examined the associations between rushing, distraction and walking on contaminated floors and the risk of slipping. Effect modification by hours worked per week, job tenure and use of slip-resistant shoes were also examined. Workers from 36 limited-service restaurants in the USA were recruited to participate in a 12-week cohort study of workplace slipping. At baseline, participants reported average work hours, average duration of exposure to each transient risk factor, and job tenure at the current location. Use of slip-resistant shoes was determined by noting the presence of a slip-resistant marking on the sole. During the following 12 weeks, participants reported their slip experience weekly and reported exposures to the three transient exposures at the time of the slip. Among 396 participants who reported baseline information, a total of 210 participants reported one or more slips during the follow-up period. The rate of slipping was significantly increased by rushing (RR=2.9, 95% CI 2.5 to 3.3), distraction (RR=1.7, 95% CI 1.5 to 2.0) and walking on a contaminated floor (RR=14.6, 95% CI 12.6 to 17.0). Use of slip-resistant shoes decreased the effects of rushing and walking on a contaminated floor. RR for all three transient factors decreased monotonically as job tenure increased. The results suggest the importance of these transient risk factors, particularly floor contamination, on risk of slipping in limited-service restaurant workers. Stable characteristics reduced the effects of transient exposures.