

Safety Alert

Event Number: 15913

Event Date: 26 May 2016

Classification: MTI

Infected cut to finger

Description of Event:

While sharpening a chainsaw the Injured Person (IP) was pushing a sharpening file with pressure in a slight upward direction to get the correct set on the chainsaw tooth. The file slipped from the tooth causing the IP's hand to come into contact with the saw tooth. The saw tooth penetrated his glove and the IP received a surface cut of approximately 10 mm to his knuckle on his index finger on his right hand. The cut became infected and the IP required medical treatment for the infection.

Mechanism of injury



Cut to Knuckle



Contributing Factors:

- Contaminants on the chainsaw tooth and on his gloves possibly infected the wound.
- The IP did not thoroughly clean the wound prior to applying a plaster.
- The gloves worn by the IP were not suitable to protect against forced contact with sharp objects.

Actions to Prevent Reoccurrence:

- Education for staff on assessing severity of injuries, and on cleaning and dressing cuts and abrasions.
- Wear suitable cut and penetration resistant gloves.
- Use file guide – to reduce file slipping.

Lessons Learnt:

- Never underestimate the severity of a cut or skin abrasion.
- Carefully clean and dress the wound with approved first aid equipment.
- Seek medical attention if there are any signs of cross contamination/infection.

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