

# A Montana Study

By The Montana Coalition for Employee Functionality Safety and Health,  
and the Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety  
(Hand Functionality vs Job Functionality)

## Executive Summary

***Past performance predicts future potential.*** Nowhere is this more vivid today than in our places of work. Today, Repetitive Stress Injuries, like CTS (Carpal Tunnel Syndrome), are disabling employees, at an alarming rate, and costing employers over \$60 Billion per year and rising. Yet, for over 25 years we have effectively done nothing to abate this problem and regrettably (regardless of the source of the problem) under the system today, **work is blamed** and the employer pays.

Without change, we are destined to more of the same. It is time to intervene and protect our workforce, to salvage our workers' comp systems and deliver effective occupational safety and health programs.

A Montana Coalition has been assembled to do just that. The coalition is initiating a study to determine how RSI injuries in the workforce may be avoided/eliminated and how Workers' Compensation claims/premiums may be significantly reduced by introducing new technology, innovation and good old American ingenuity. The new technology has completed 6 years in "beta" testing. It is FDA approved and ADA and EEOC compliant. As a medical diagnostic aid this technology "sees" the effects of CTS and other hand functionality issues better than anything available today. As a work place screening device, it objectively establishes a person's hand functionality as clearly and accurately as a typing test reflects a person's word-per-minute capability. The test is safe, fast, accurate, and cost effective.

This Study, the first of its kind in the nation to accurately measure hand functionality with job description, will be conducted through partnership with the members of the Montana Coalition which is sponsored and lead by the Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety: A nonprofit foundation with diverse research expertise in workplace safety, patient safety, organization and ergonomics.

The Coalition is currently seeking participants in this 18 month Montana Study of over 5,000 employees. The Coalition will administer functionality screens for each participating employee on a four month cycle, such that the majority of the test participants will have been tested four times during the study. The first tests will be used to establish a baseline for the individuals in the study. The Study will correlate the functionality capabilities of the employees with job description, work loss records, injury records, and work error records to determine acceptable hand functionality levels for future job applicants. The study will determine acceptable levels; demonstrate how the application to the existing employees would have reduced on-the-job injuries and time lost due to these injuries, and assist in the implementation of an employee functionality screening program tailored to the needs of an organization. This study is a catalyst for change – change in a workplace environment that has only known pain, suffering and higher costs. It is time for change. Technology has given us the opportunity to safely, quickly accurately and cost effectively facilitate public health & wellness through injury prevention.

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**To do nothing is to accept the same results that have been reaped every year for the last 25 year.**