

Characteristics of Workers and of Injuries and Illnesses Involving Days away from Work

Workers

Men constituted 55% of the employed workers covered by SOII in 1997, but they accounted for 67% of the 1.8 million occupational injury and illness cases with days away from work (Figure 1–19). Workers aged 25 to 44 constituted 53% of the employed workers covered by SOII in 1997 and accounted for 59% of injuries and illnesses involving days away from work (Figure 1–20).

Ten occupations accounted for nearly one-third of the 1.8 million injuries and illnesses involving days away from work in 1997 (Figure 1–21). Truck drivers, nonconstruction laborers, and nursing aides and orderlies each accounted for more than 90,000 job-related injuries and illnesses involving days away from work. Injuries and illnesses in these three groups represent almost 19% of the total cases with days away from work in 1997. The five occupational groups with the largest numbers of injuries involving days away from work during 1993–1997 are shown in Figure 1–22. Truck drivers accounted for the largest number of lost-time injuries each year.

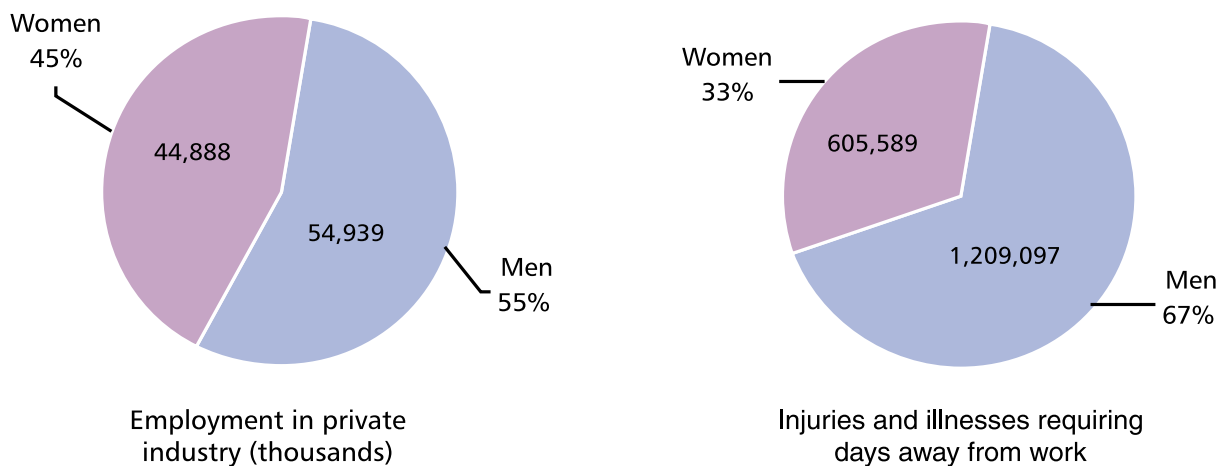


Figure 1–19. Employment in private industry and distribution of nonfatal occupational injury and illness cases with days away from work, by sex of worker aged 16 and older, 1997. Excludes cases in which sex of worker was not reported. Total number of injury and illness cases with days away from work was 1,833,380. (Source: BLS [1999]; SOII [1999].)

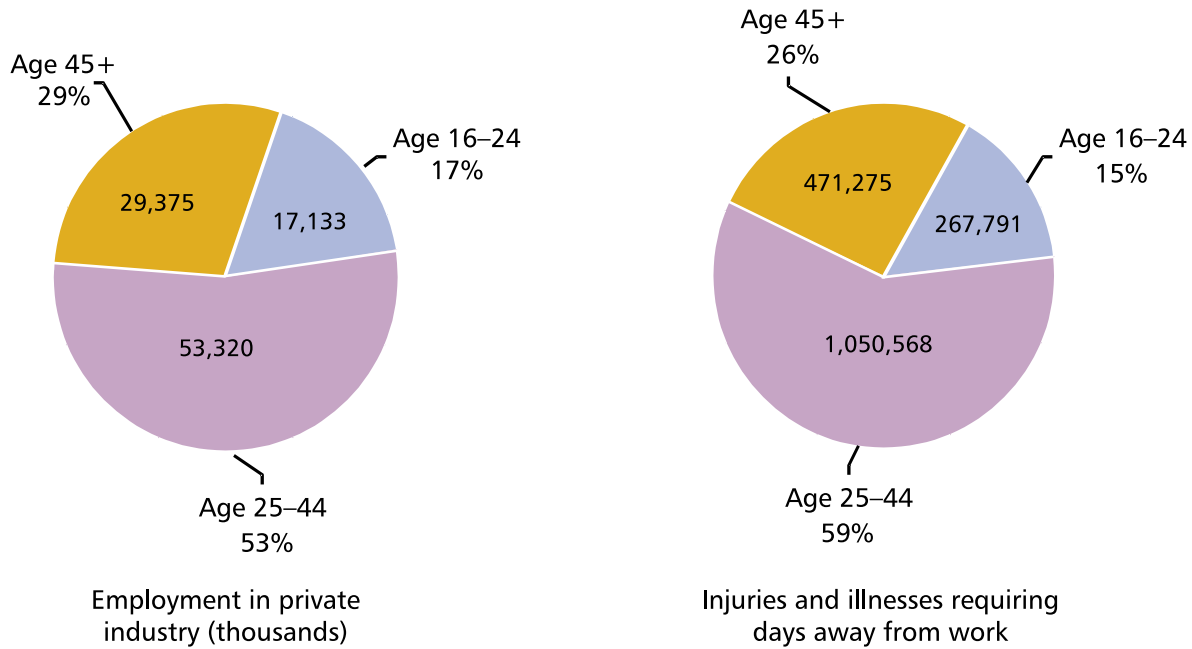


Figure 1-20. Employment in private industry and distribution of nonfatal injury and illness cases with days away from work, by age of worker, 1997. Excludes cases in which age of worker was not reported. Total number of injury and illness cases with days away from work was 1,833,380. (Source: BLS [1999]; SOII [1999].)

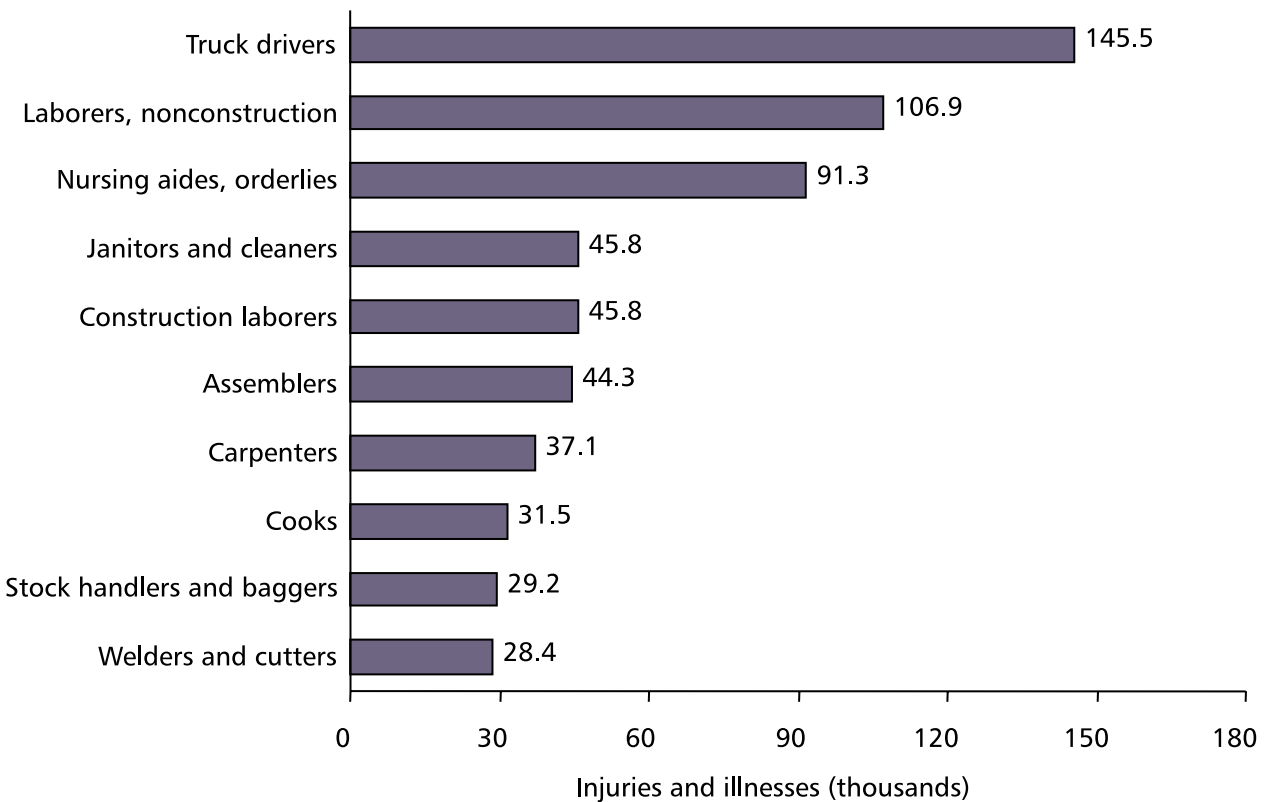


Figure 1-21. Ten occupations with the most injuries and illnesses involving days away from work, 1997. Total number of injuries and illnesses involving days away from work was 1,833,380. (Source: SOII [1999].)

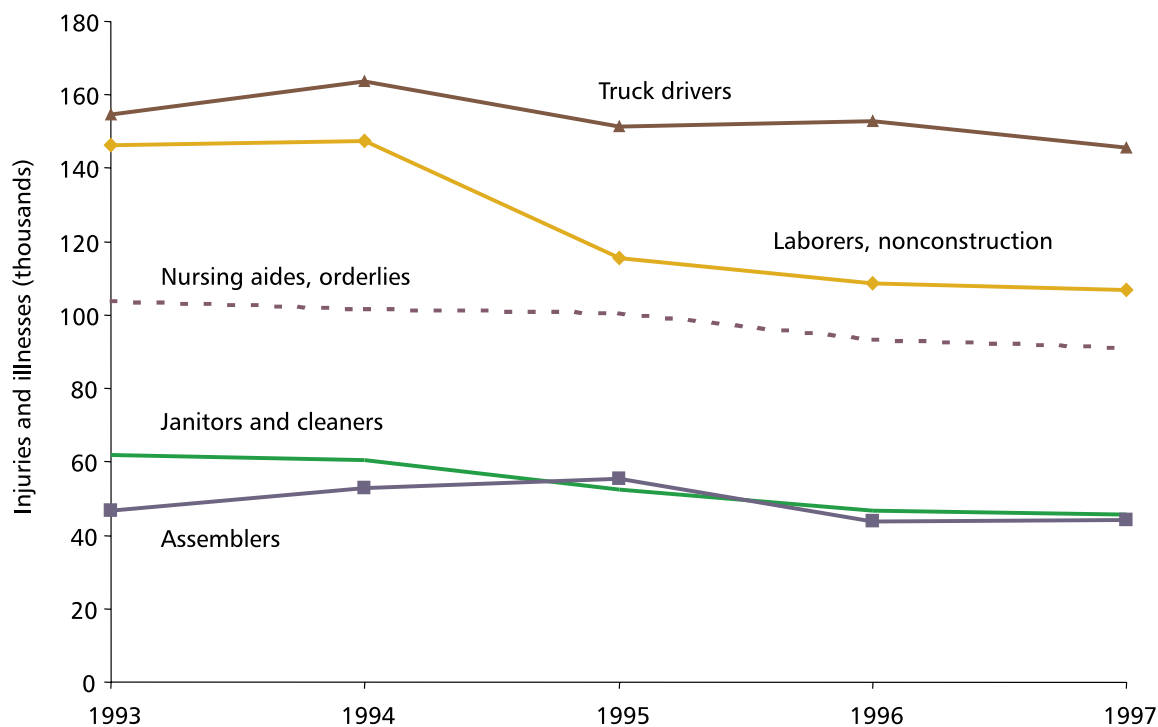


Figure 1–22. Number of occupational injuries and illnesses involving time away from work, for selected occupations, 1993–1997. (Source: SOII [1999].)

Injuries and Illnesses

Thirty-one percent of nonfatal injuries and illnesses involving days away from work in 1997 occurred among new workers (i.e., workers having less than 1 year of service with their employer). The percentages for new workers were even higher in mining (44%), agriculture, forestry, and fishing (43%), construction (41%), and wholesale and retail trade (34%) (Figure 1–23). Nearly two-thirds of injury and illness cases with days away from work occurred among workers with 5 or fewer years of service with their employer.

Sprains and strains were by far the most frequent disabling conditions, accounting for 799,012 cases (43.6%) with days away from work. Bruises accounted for 165,800 cases (9.0%), and cuts and punctures accounted for another 156,700 cases (8.5%) (Figure 1–24). The back was the body part most often affected by disabling work incidents (Figure 1–25). Bodily reaction and exertion, contact with objects and equipment, and falls were the most frequent events or exposures leading to work injury or illness that involved days away from work (Figure 1–26).

Severity of illness or injury can be estimated from the number of days away from work. Five days was the median number of days away from work for all types of injury and illness. Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS), fractures, amputations, tendinitis, multiple injuries, and sprains and strains had median days away from work greater than the 5-day median for all injuries and illnesses combined (Figure 1–27).

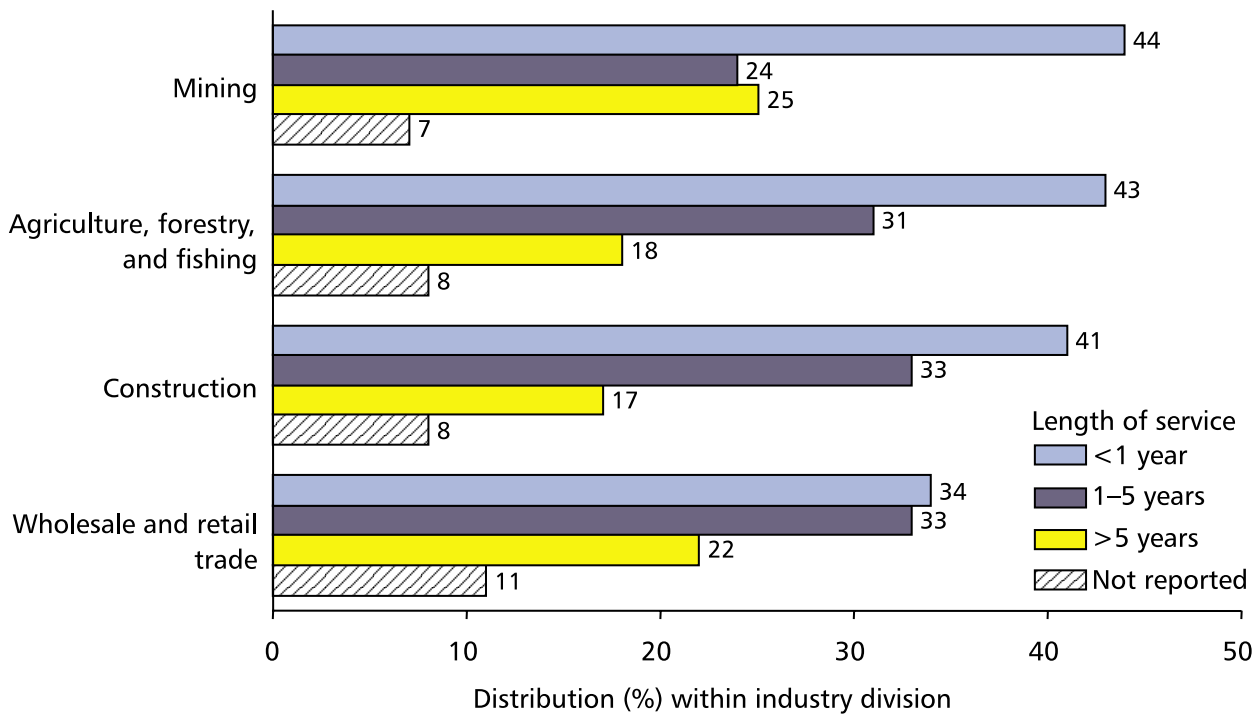


Figure 1–23. Distribution of nonfatal injuries and illnesses involving days away from work within selected private industry divisions, by length of service with employer, 1997. (Source: SOII [1999].)

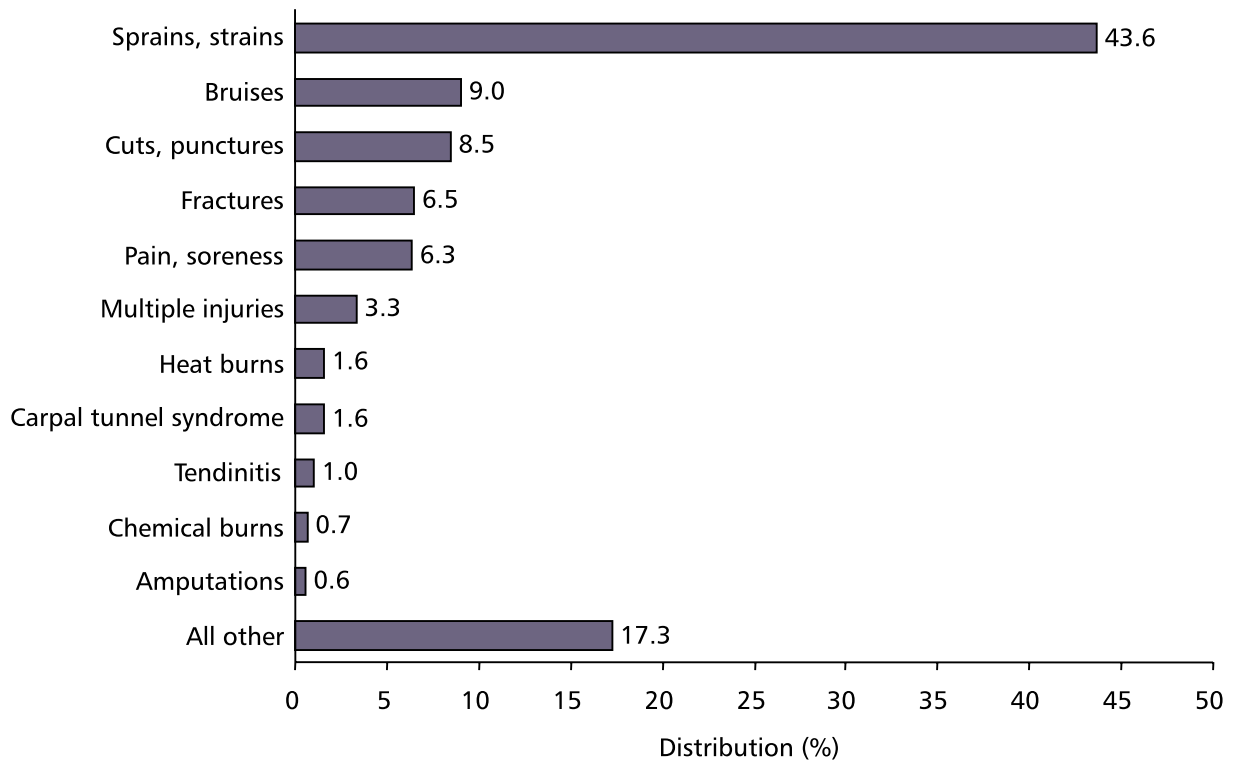


Figure 1–24. Distribution of injury and illness cases with days away from work in private industry, by nature of injury or illness, 1997. Total number of injury and illness cases with days away from work was 1,833,380. (Source: SOII [1999].)

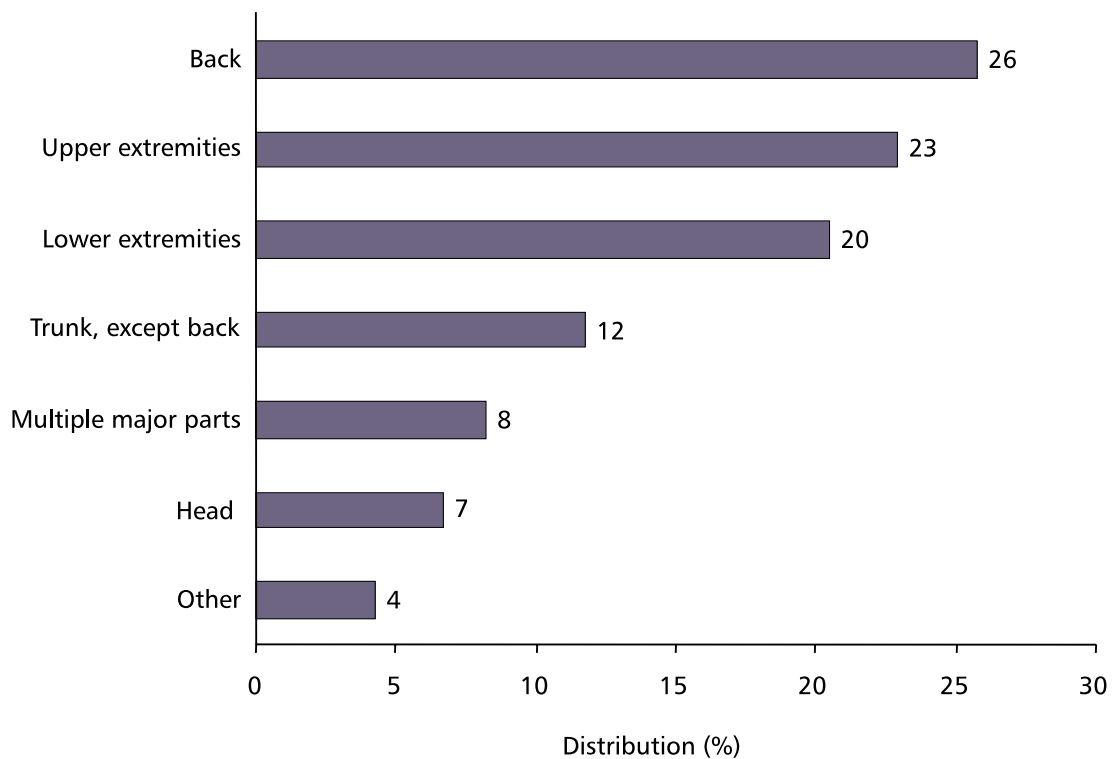


Figure 1–25. Distribution of injury and illness cases with days away from work in private industry, by part of body affected, 1997. Total number of injuries and illnesses involving days away from work was 1,833,380. (Source: SOII [1999].)

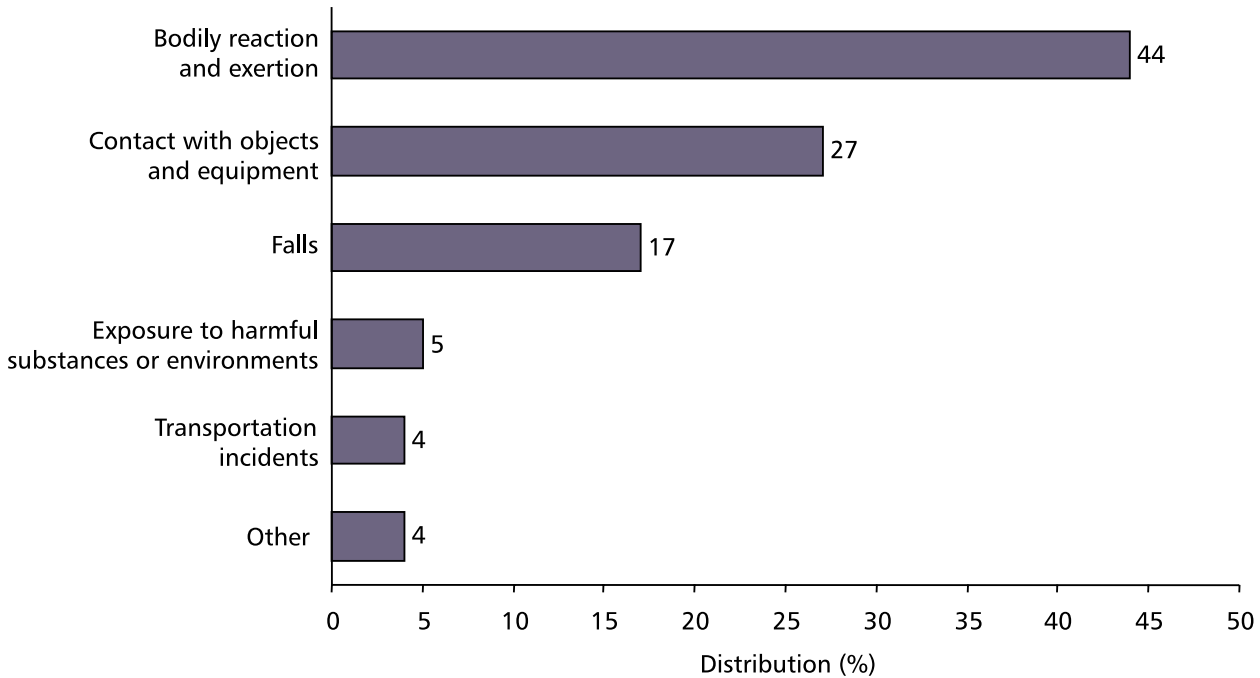


Figure 1–26. Distribution of occupational injuries and illnesses involving days away from work in private industry, by type of event or exposure, 1997. Total number of injuries and illnesses involving days away from work was 1,833,380. (Source: SOII [1999].)

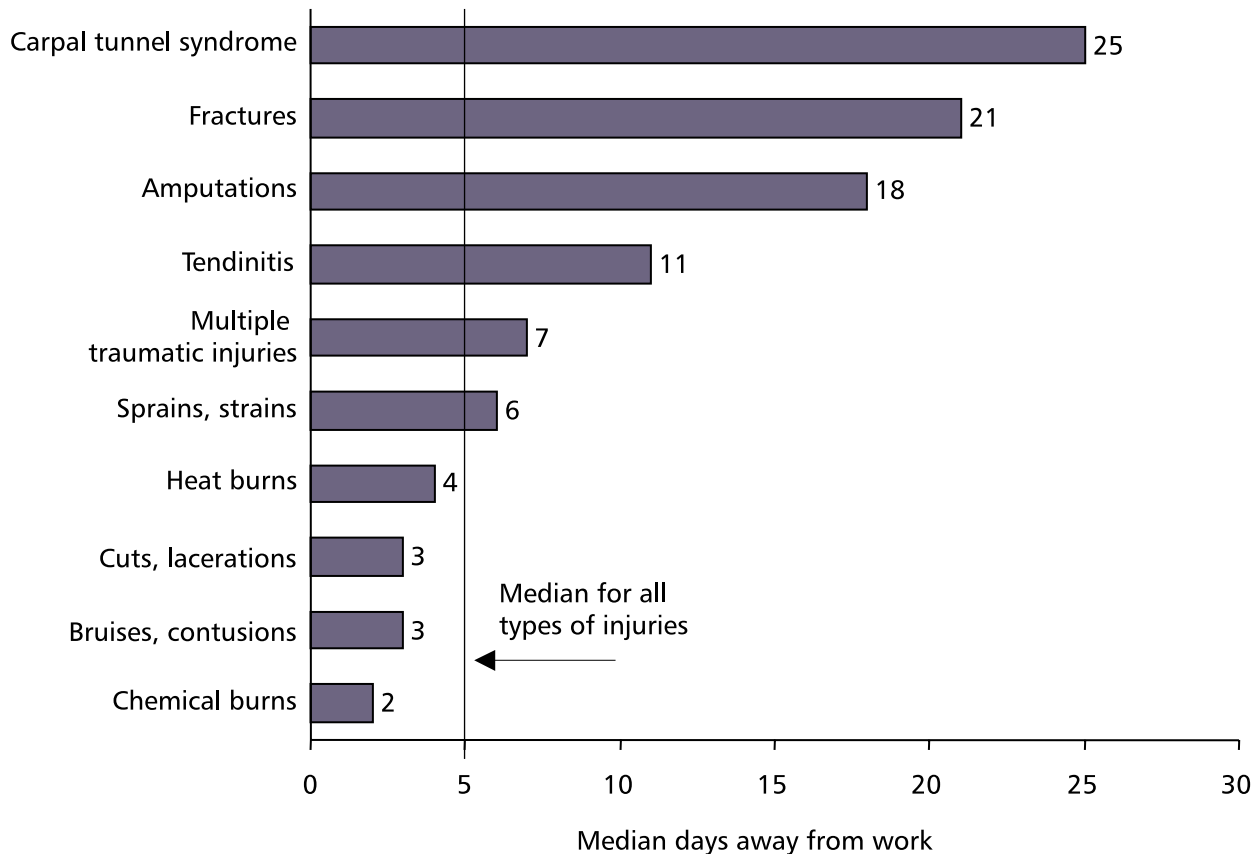


Figure 1–27. Median days away from work due to selected types of nonfatal occupational injury or illness in private industry, 1997. (Source: SOII [1999].)