

## Indicator 5: Amputations Identified in Workers' Compensation System

### Significance

Most work-related amputations involve full or partial loss of fingers. Less common amputations involve the arm, leg, foot, toe, nose or ear. Work-related amputations can be prevented through the identification and control of occupational hazards and the implementation of safety procedures and regulations.

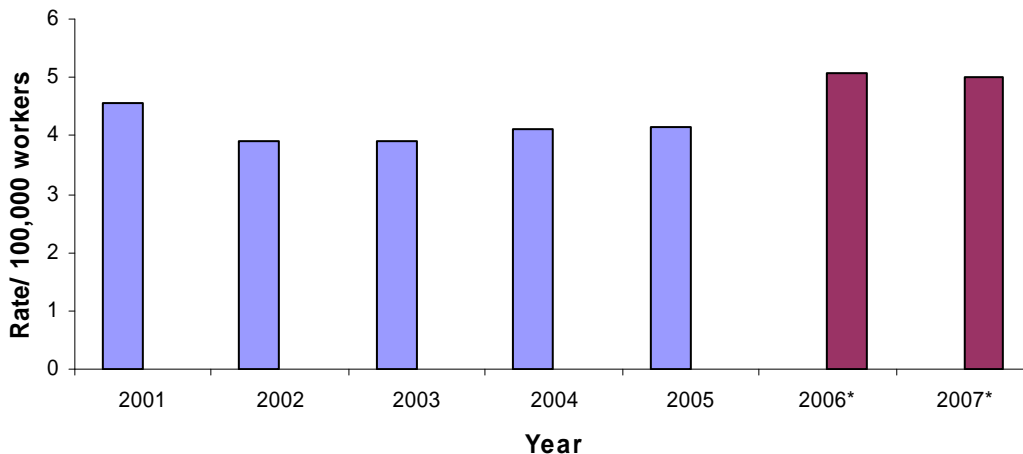
### Methods

The Colorado Department of Labor, Division of Workers' Compensation, reports the number of compensation claims filed for amputations that resulted in lost work time. Amputation counts are coded as "02" as per the Workers' Compensation Insurance Organization (WCIO) coding scheme for the first report of injury. Amputations were selected based on acceptance status in the workers' compensation system, with 3 or more days of lost work time based on claimants date of injury. Amputation claims were included regardless of employer size, claimant age or claimant state of residence and claims filed by employees of self-insured employers are included. Federal employees and selected industries, as well as independent contractors, are exempt from filing under state workers' compensation laws and are therefore not included. Incidence rates are calculated using the numbers of workers covered by workers' compensation provided by the National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI).

In 2006, utilizing CSTE guidance, the case definition for amputations was changed to more accurately characterize amputations identified in the workers' compensation system.

### Results

**Figure 5.1 Annual incidence rate of amputations filed with workers compensation per 100,000 workers covered, Colorado, 2001-2007**



*Source: Colorado Department of Labor, Division of Workers' Compensation (numerator)  
National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI) estimate of workers covered by workers' compensation (denominator)  
Workers who are self-employed (farmers, independent contractors), who work in small businesses or who are Federal employees are not covered by Colorado workers' compensation insurers and therefore are not included in these estimates.  
\* Amputation case definition modified to follow CSTE guidance*

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<b>Table 5.1 State Worker's Compensation Claims for Amputations with Lost Work Time, Colorado 2001-2007</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of amputations filed</b>	<b>Annual incidence rate of amputations filed per 100,000 workers covered</b>
<b>2001</b>	98	4.6
<b>2002</b>	82	3.9
<b>2003</b>	81	3.9
<b>2004</b>	86	4.1
<b>2005</b>	89	4.2
<b>Average 2001-2005</b>	87.2	4.1
<b>2006</b>	111	5.1
<b>2007</b>	112	5.0
<b>Average 2006-2007</b>	111.5	5.0
<p><i>Source: Colorado Department of Labor, Division of Workers' Compensation (numerator) National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI) estimate of workers covered by workers' compensation (denominator)</i></p> <p><i>Workers who are self-employed (farmers, independent contractors), who work in small businesses or who are Federal employees are not covered by Colorado workers' compensation insurers and therefore are not included in these estimates</i></p> <p><i>** Amputation case definition modified to follow CSTE guidance</i></p>		

- Between 2006 and 2007, an estimated 5 per 100,000 workers in Colorado claimed an amputation on the job with lost work-time. (Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1)
- It is not possible to determine workers' compensation trends since 2001 due to the 2006-2007 modification of the case definition used to calculate amputations filed in the Colorado workers' compensation system.

#### **Data Sources**

- Colorado Department of Labor, Division of Workers' Compensation (numerator)
- National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI) estimate of workers covered by workers' compensation (denominator)

#### **Limitations**

- The number of claims filed in the Colorado workers' compensation system may be underestimated because not all individuals with work-related injuries and illnesses file for workers' compensation.
- Those workers who are self-employed (farmers, independent contractors), who work in small businesses or who are Federal employees are not covered by Colorado workers' compensation insurers and therefore are not included in these estimates.
- Differences in eligibility criteria and availability of data from different state's workers' compensations programs limit these data from being compared with other states or with overall US data.

#### **Recommendations**

- Report amputations by industry, occupation, age, gender, race/ ethnicity and characteristics to determine important causes and patterns.

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