

IS GRIP THE NEW SAFETY FEATURE?

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This will, perhaps, be the world's shortest article, since the answer to that question is yes: grip is indeed the new safety feature. But why is grip able to offer the glove user more safety? Surely gloves have always had grip, so how can this be a new thing? The answer to these questions is to do with the type of grip, the way it's delivered and the additional benefits it brings. As any tyre manufacturer will tell you, power is nothing without grip. Grip has to be optimized for the surface condition of the road or track and gloves are no different.

Cut resistance

Often the response to recurring cut injuries is to introduce gloves with higher levels of cut resistance. However, increasing the cut resistance often treats the effect, i.e. cuts, rather than the cause of the issue, i.e. movement. After all, it's the movement of what the hand is holding that frequently cuts the glove. Simply put, if it doesn't slip then it cannot cut. Used correctly, a glove with ANSI cut level 2 / EN level 3 with the right grip can be as effective if not more effective than a glove with ANSI cut level 4 / EN level 5. Using thinner gloves will also increase worker acceptance through better comfort.

Worker comfort

Worker comfort is always one of the first things people consider when selecting or trying on a glove. Is it comfortable? Does it offer the needed dexterity, flexibility and tactility? Gloves that offer more cut resistance are frequently more bulky, working against the other metrics. It's a question of protection versus comfort. It's fundamental to get this right, since bulky gloves will be taken off for precision-handling tasks leaving bare hands exposed to the risk of a cut. This is why many case studies conclude that using gloves with a higher cut resistance will not necessarily reduce the injury frequency rate (IFR).

Hand fatigue

Have you ever clenched your fist 100 times? If you have, then you'll know that at the outset it's easy but towards the end it becomes more difficult. This fatigue is similar to when your hand lifts and holds something over and over again. Why? Because it has to apply force and force needs energy. It's no different for workers using their hands professionally. With glove grip enhanced by just 5%, the dry lift increases from 24kg (bare hand) to 25.26kg (gloved hand). At ATG®, we like to think of it another way. Rather than being able to lift an extra 1.26kg with an optimized grip, we say that only 2.38kg of force is required to lift 1kg instead of 2.5kg, and these small differences over a working day, week, month and year(s) can make a significant difference.

Time for change?

We at ATG® believe so. People have been poorly served and come to accept that coated cut-resistant gloves are PU. All solid film PU gloves don't breathe, don't fit, don't last and often contain harmful chemicals. We were inspired to develop something totally new within the cut sector based on the core values of MaxiFlex®, creating the world's first game-changing biomimetic cut-resistant glove, MaxiFlex® Cut™.

