



Hispanic Hotel Room Attendant Injuries: A labor union and university collaboration

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A labor union and university collaboration

Susan Buchanan – Occupational medicine expertise & statistical analysis

UNITE HERE – Hotel industry, labor & health and safety expertise, data collection & management

Laura Punnett – Occupational epidemiology & workplace musculoskeletal expertise

Niklas Krause – Musculoskeletal injuries of hotel room attendants expertise



Why Room Attendants?

- One of the largest job titles
 - 20% of hotel workers in our sample
- Overwhelmingly female and non-white
 - 98% female
 - 93% Non-white
 - 37% Hispanic
- Dangerous hotel job



Previous Work: Room Attendant Work Hazardous

- Krause (2005): 47% report 'severe' or 'very severe' pain
- Frumin et. al. (2006): Room attendant injury rate = 10.4%
- Marras et. al. (2006/2007): 'high' risk job for low back disorders
- Orr (2004): Mattress lifting scored 1.29 on NIOSH Lifting Index = unsafe lift



Previous Work: Gender and Race/Ethnicity Disparities

- **Murray (2003):** Disproportionate disease among Blacks & Hispanics
- **U.S. BLS (2003):** Excess rates of injuries for Blacks & Hispanics
- **U.S. BLS (1998):** Excess rates of injuries among women in selected occupations



Goals of Study

- Estimate injury rates for hotel workers and room attendants in the full-service US hotel market
- Compare injury rates by gender and race/ethnicity
- Characterize room attendant injuries suffered by Female Hispanics – the largest group.



Dataset: Employer Records

- 2003-05 records for union hotels in the 5 largest full-service hotel chains:
 - Hilton
 - Hyatt
 - Intercontinental
 - Marriott
 - Starwood
- Two sets of data collected:
 - Workplace injuries recorded on OSHA logs
 - Demographic and job info on hiring lists



Population and Samples

- Population: 28,000+ employees/yr
72 hotel properties
- Sample: 16,000+ employees/yr
35 hotel properties
700+ injuries/yr
- Study Pop: 3,273 Room Attendants (RAs)
- 174 injuries/yr

1,177 Female Hispanic Room Attendants (FHRAs)
- 84 injuries/yr



Distribution of Hotel Workers by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

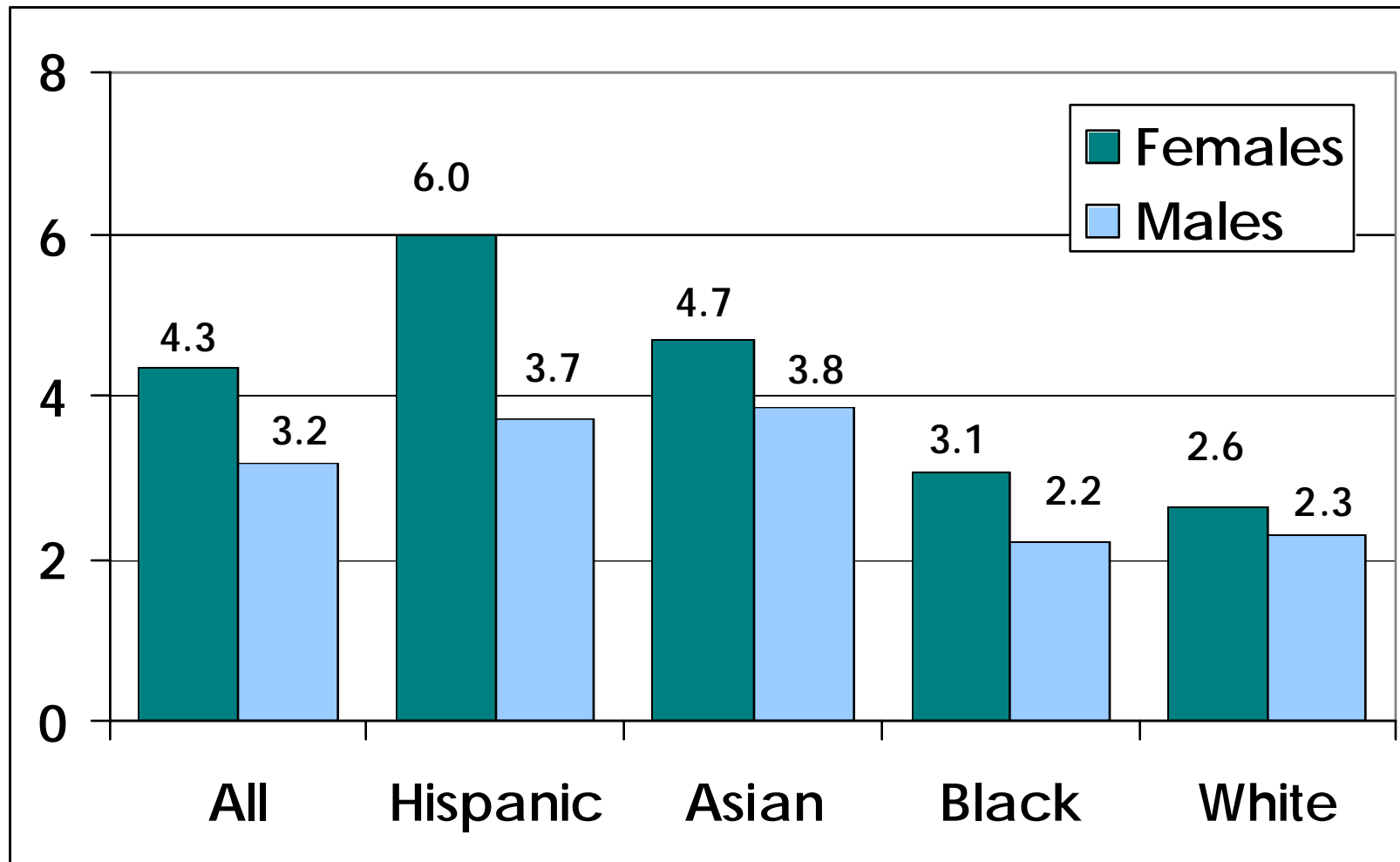
	All Hotel Workers	Room Attendants
Female	42.3%	97.7%
Male	57.7%	2.3%
Amer. Indian	0.3%	0.1%
Asian	24.9%	28.4%
Black	20.5%	27.3%
Hispanic	34.8%	36.6%
White	19.2%	7.3%



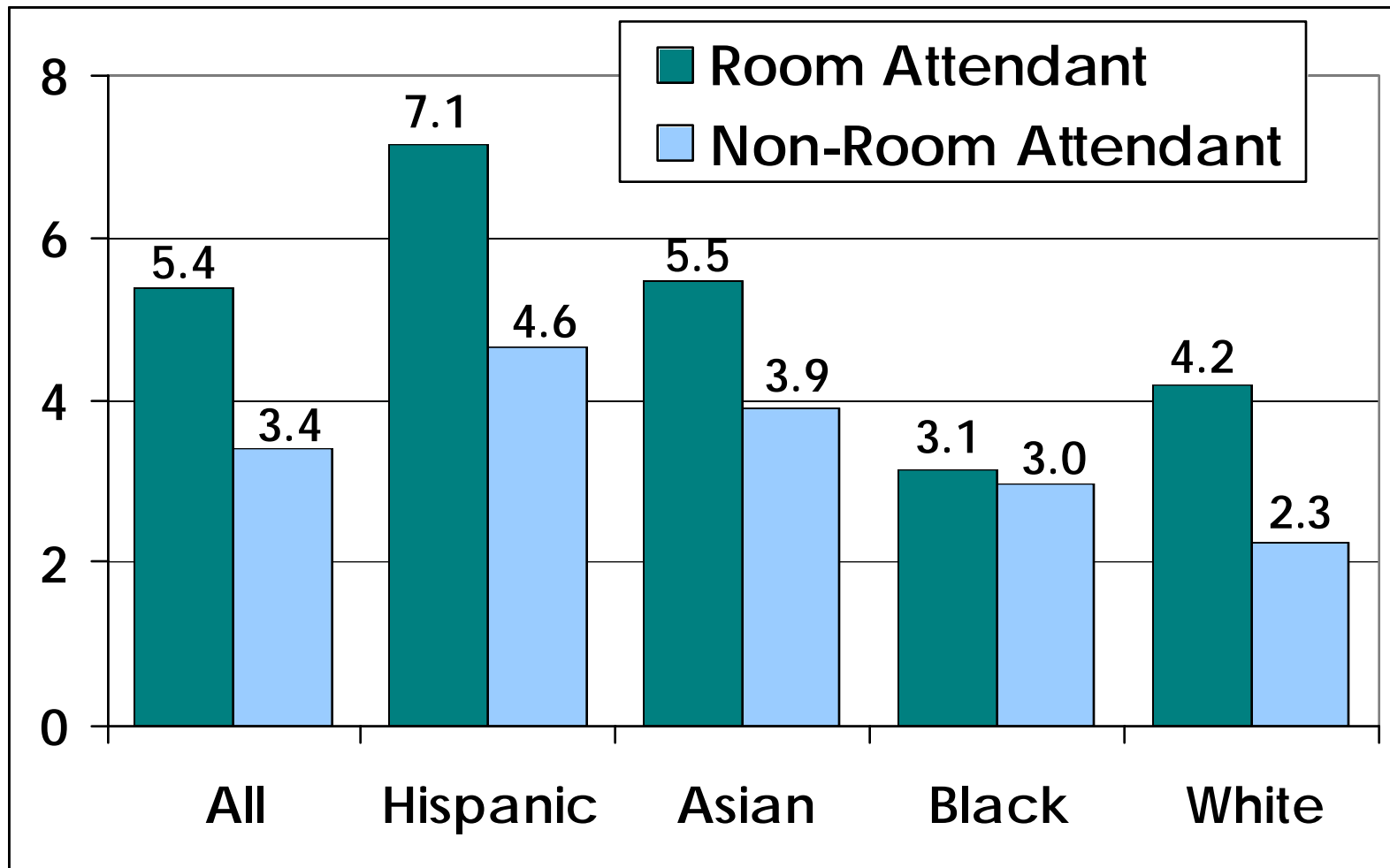
Injury Definition

- Injury is defined as the “First Injury” per worker recorded in study database by identifying their names on the OSHA logs.
- The injury data is restricted to only one injury event per worker, meaning that all injuries included in the study are independent of each other.
- Injury rates are presented as the number of injuries per 100 workers.

Hotel Employee Injury Rates, 2003-2005



Female Room Attendant Injury Rates, 2003-2005

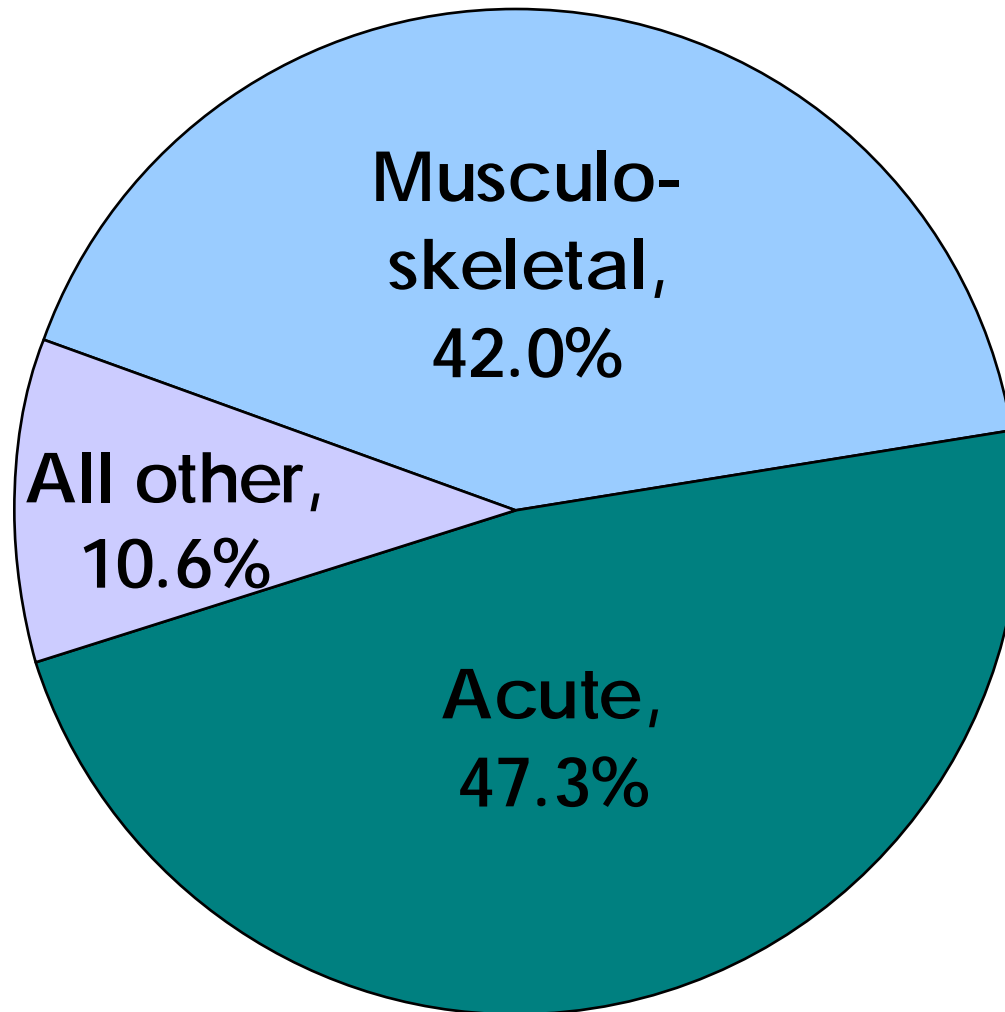




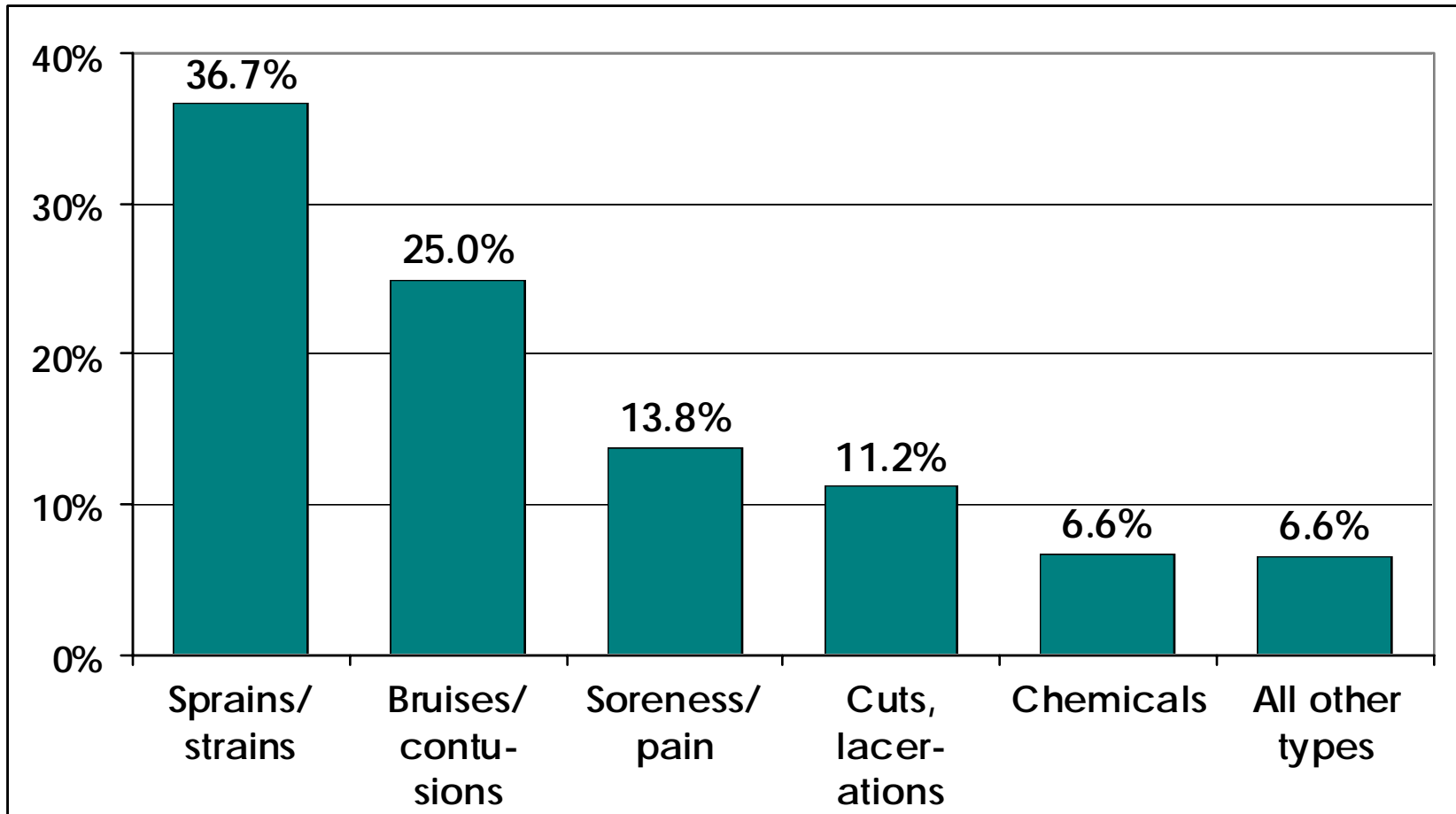
Injury Descriptives

- Female Hispanic Room Attendant (FHRA) injuries for 2003-2005
- Six Characteristics of injuries:
 - Nature of Injury
 - Injury Severity
 - Body Part Injured
 - Injury Event
 - Source of Injury
 - Location of Injury

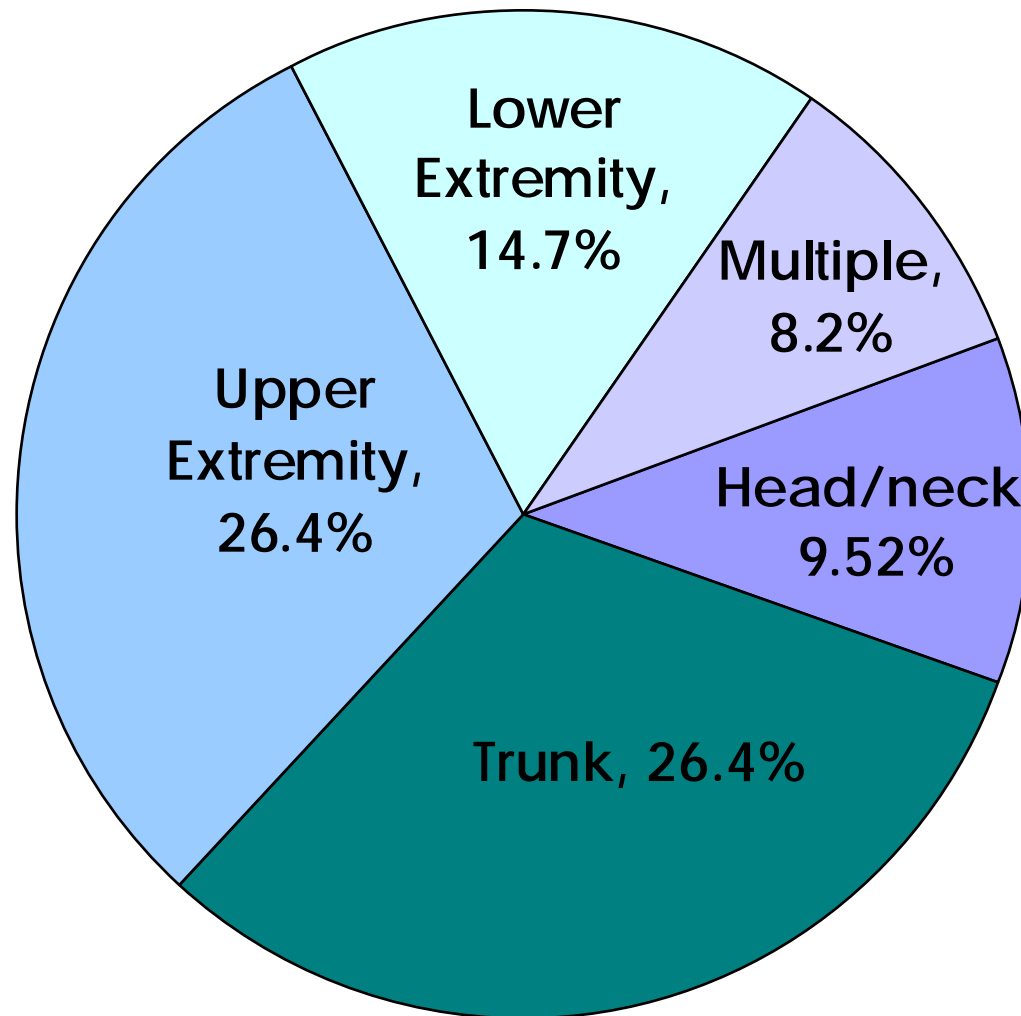
Distribution of FHRA Injuries by broad nature categories



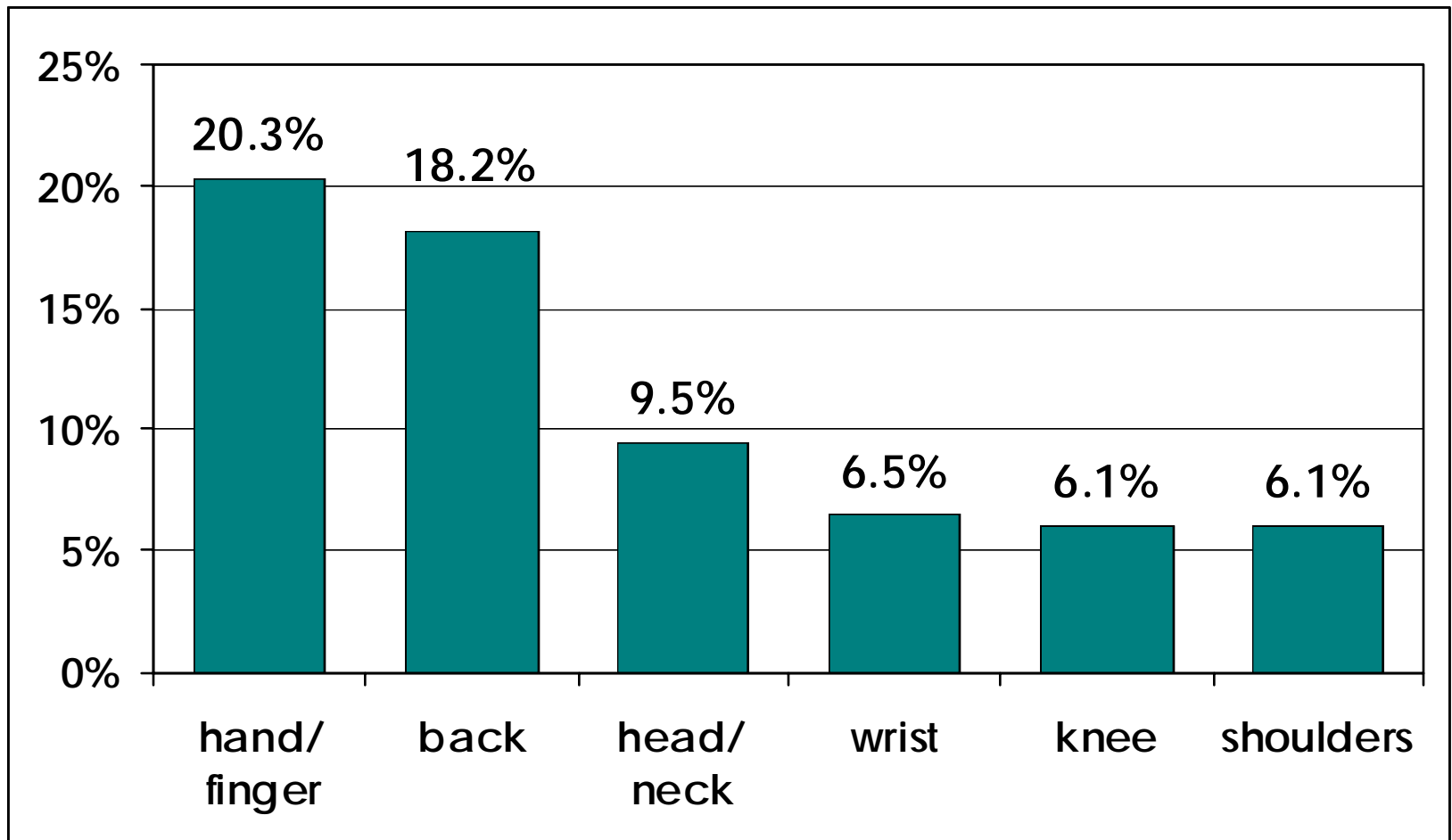
Distribution of FHRA injuries by detailed nature categories



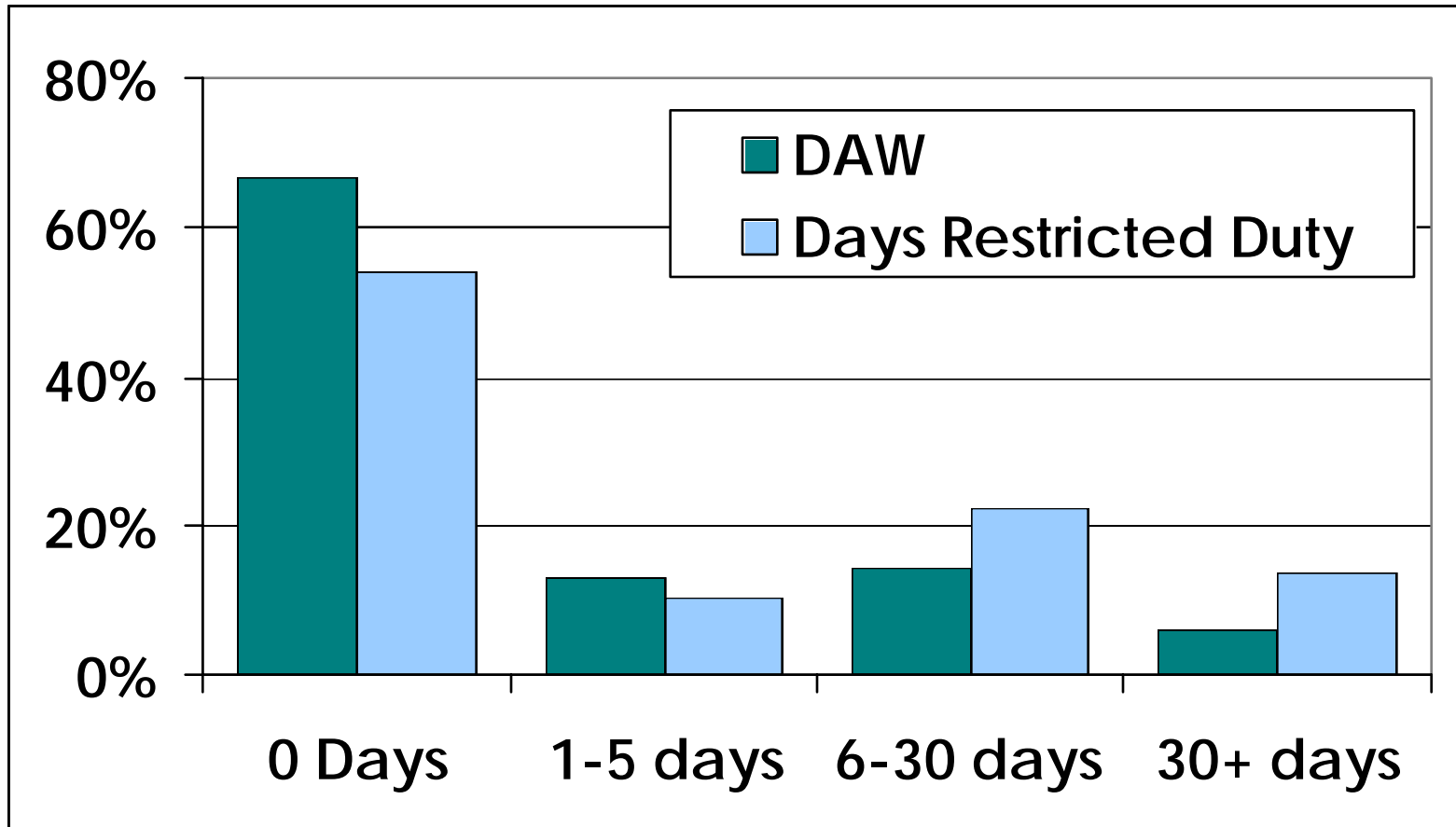
Distribution of FHRA injuries by body area



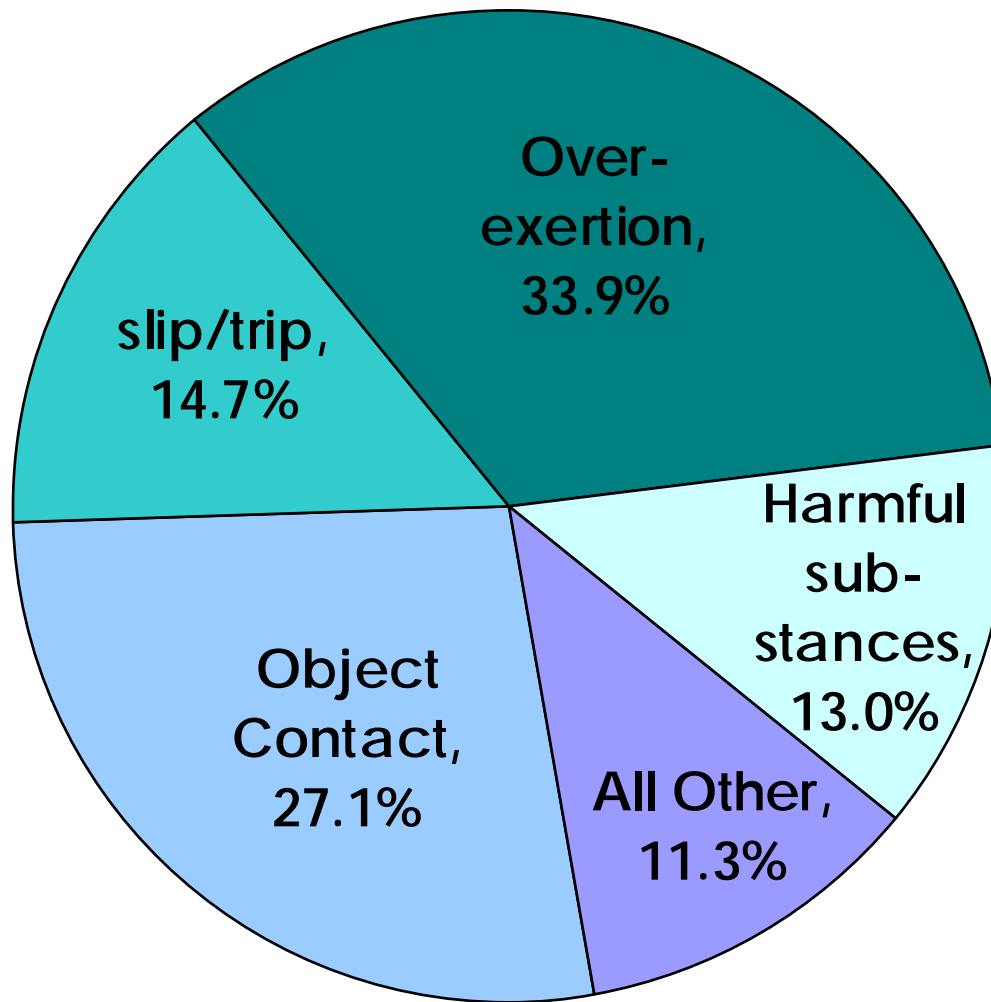
Distribution of FHRA injuries by body part



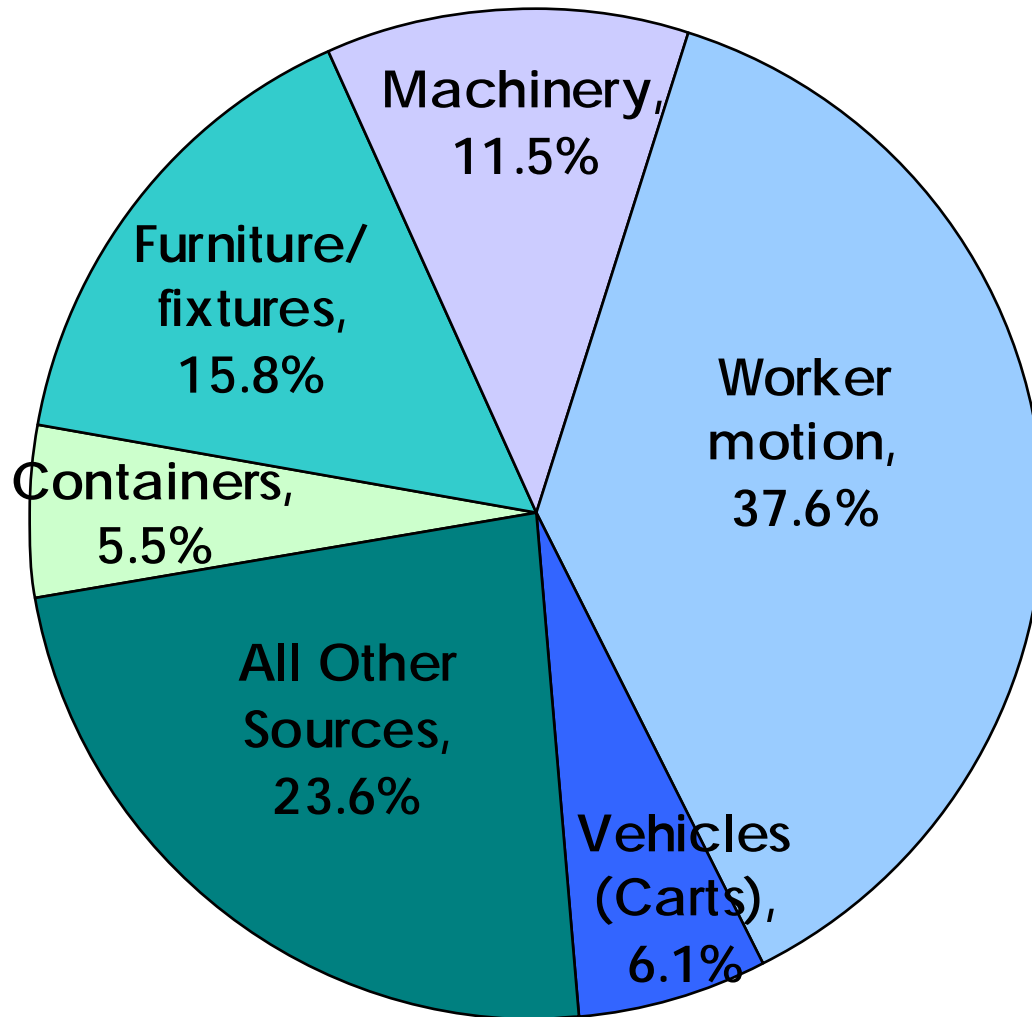
Distribution of FHRA Injuries by severity



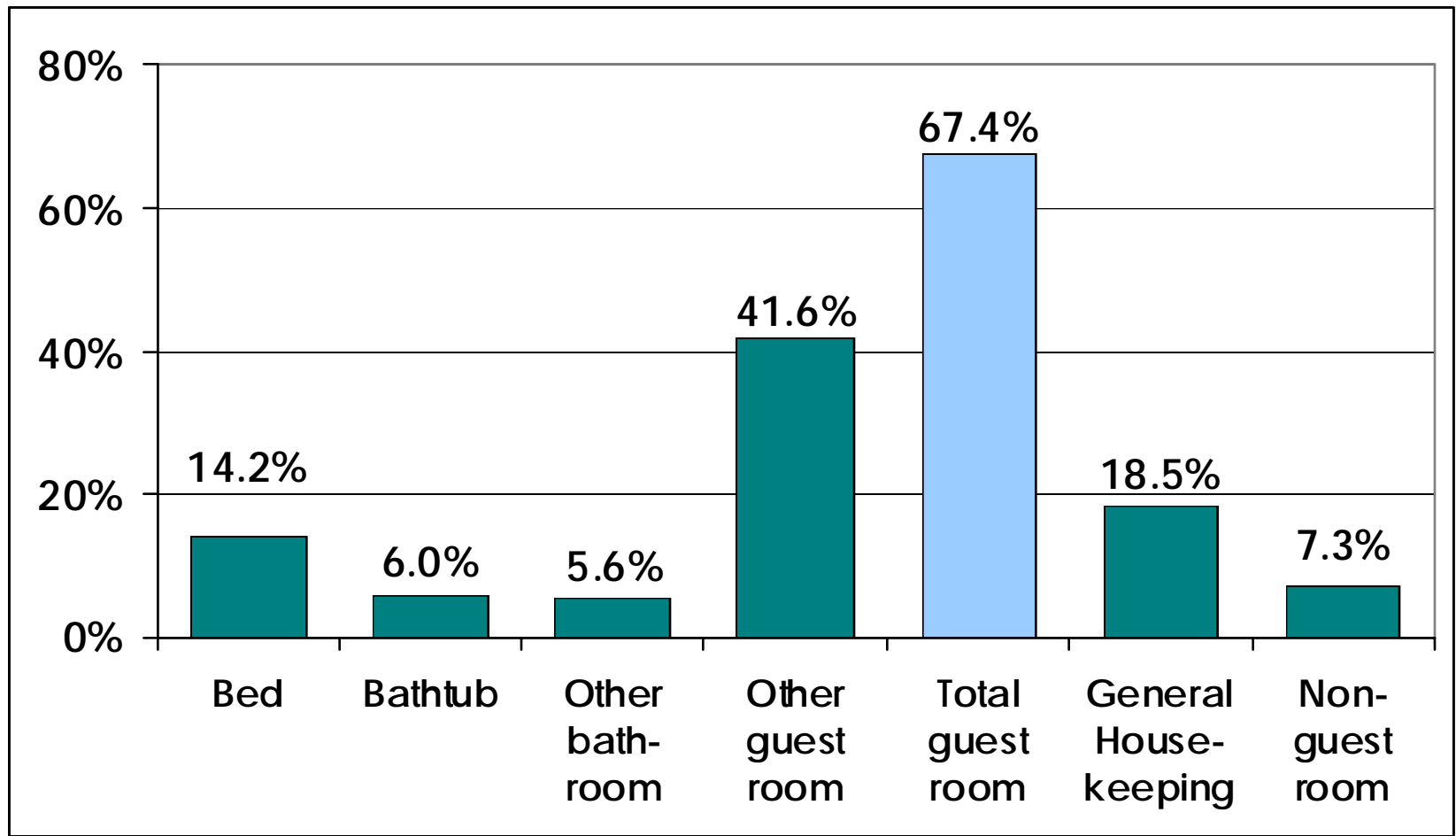
Distribution of FHRA injuries by injury event



Distribution of FHRA injuries by injury source



Distribution of FHRA injuries by location





Conclusions

- Female Hispanic hotel employees have highest injury rate of 6.0 injuries/100 workers
- Female Hispanic room attendants have a higher rate of injury of 7.1 injuries/100 workers
- All female room attendants' injury rate of 5.4 is higher than all female hotel workers' of 4.3.
- Over two thirds of all room attendant injuries occurred in the guest room



Conclusions continued

- Sprains/strains were the leading nature of injury
- Over half of all injuries occurred to the upper extremity and trunk
- Overexertion was the leading injury event (34%) followed by contact with object
- Worker motion accounted for close to 40% of injury sources



Limitations

- Potential error in employer-based records; disincentives to injury reporting; lack of restricted duty policies
- Hotels with union contracts may not be representative of all 'full service' hotels; we are unable to directly measure hazards in nonunion hotel sector
- 2002 changes in OSHA-mandated definitions and recordkeeping practices leading to artificial declines in incidence rates (Friedman/Forst, 2007)



Future Analyses

- Analysis of impact of age and job tenure on injury rates
- Expand analysis to other job titles
- Analysis of days of restricted duty and days away from work by gender, race and job title, including the existence of light duty policies
- Investigate causes for higher injury rates to female Hispanic room attendants



Recommendations

Engage hotel employers to:

- 1 Face the challenges they have created affecting workers' health and safety
- 2 Investigate causal factors of injury rate disparities and specifically, higher rates among female Hispanic room attendants
- 3 Implement the existing remedies and make them the industry standard
- 4 Perform job task hazard assessments, especially ergonomic hazards