Health Cards

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HEALTH CARDS

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HEALTH CARD

Repetitive work

Vary work tasks to avoid musculoskeletal problems

Do you perform the same tasks for prolonged periods and experience discomfort or pain?

Understand that you can work smarter, more efficiently and without pain. The key to this is good planning, organisation and how you carry out the work.

Risk assessment

- Duration and frequency of the repeated tasks. Opportunities for variation, breaks and a say in decisions.
- The strength, precision and working positions the task requires.
- Adequate training and upskilling.
- In particular, watch out for: working above shoulder height, below knee height, while bending forward and/or with a rotated neck and back.

Threshold values

Varied tasks, micro breaks, options you can freely choose between. Repeated a few times per hour.

Some variation, some control over the working day, numerous repetitions within 30 minutes.

Many repetitions per minute, static working positions, lack of control over your working day.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Plan the organisation of the work together with their teams.
- Introduce job rotation and work variation into tasks.
- Provide employees with the right training.
- Have the right tools available.

Employee responsibilities

- Think variation, be curious and get involved.
- Complete the required training.
- Request training if you lack it.
- Use the right tools and aids.
- Your body is your most important tool - take care of it.

Ensure you use smart and varied working positions. Plan to ensure variation in tasks. Understand that musculoskeletal problems can be avoided.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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HEALTH CARD

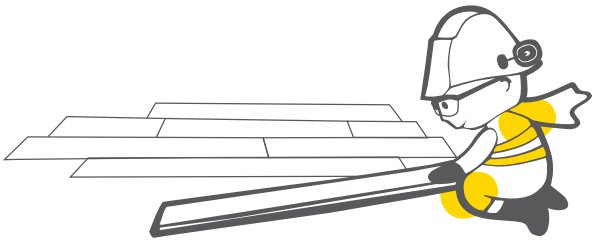
Work squatting or kneeling

Vary your working position frequently when performing tasks below knee height

When we need to bend down below knee height, we work with bent joints and stretched muscles. The body manages to do this well, but we need to consider whether these working positions are maintained over time, combined with the use of heavy tools/lifting, and repeated frequently.

The knees are particularly vulnerable if they are in direct contact with the ground (refer to this health card in conjunction with the health card on working while bending forward).

Always ensure proper planning, organisation, and execution of work in squatting or kneeling positions.



Risk assessment

- How many minutes of your workday are spent working in a squatted/kneeling position?
- Consider the surface. Hard and uneven surfaces increase the risk of discomfort/ailments.
- Assess additional strain when using heavy tools and/or lifting.
- Consider alternative working methods and aids.

Threshold values

A few times or short duration: Less than one hour per day and less than 15 consecutive minutes.

Periodically: 15-30 consecutive minutes and a total of 1-2 hours per day.

More than 30 minutes at a time or over half the working day in total. Demanding substrate/surface.

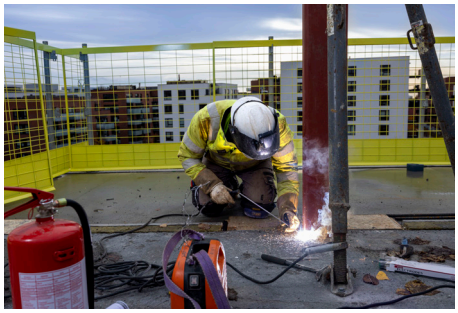
Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Ensure good planning with regard to working positions early in the project.
- Consider other work methods, materials, and tools to limit work below knee height.
- Provide aids such as good knee pads, knee protectors, low stools, and cushioned pads.
- Plan job rotation (with colleagues/other tasks).

Employee responsibilities

- Help find good work methods.
- Use aids such as knee pads, low stools, etc.
- Ensure variation in work positions, take short breaks and stand up regularly.
- Participate in job rotation.



There are a multitude of tasks below knee height in addition to the ones you see in the pictures. Make sure to plan tasks to reduce the time spent in these work positions.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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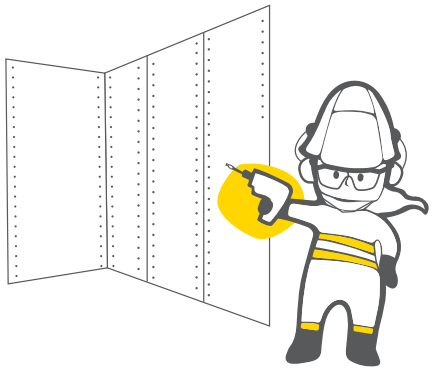
HEALTH CARD

Repetitive arm or hand movements

A lack of variation can cause discomfort/ailments



By repetitive arm or hand movements, we mean monotonous work with the hands and limited opportunities for variation. This involves work that requires fine motor skills or the use of force.

Strain can occur even if the work is physically light, such as with static tasks like using machine levers or computer work, and can overstrain muscles and tendons. Pay special attention to fingers, hands, arms, shoulders and neck.

Risk assessment

- Assess how often and how long the work/ movement is repeated.
- Assess whether the movements are performed in fixed/locked or uncomfortable positions.
- Assess whether the task has requirements related to vision, strength, precision, caution, or control.

Threshold values

The work is repeated a few times per hour.

The work is repeated many times per hour There are limited opportunities to vary work positions and movements.

The work is repeated many times per minute.

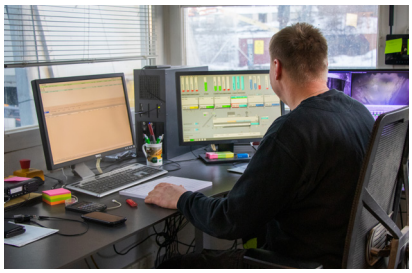
Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Good planning early on in the project can reduce the number of repetitive arm and hand movements.
- Consider alternative work methods
- Facilitate job rotation between different work tasks.
- Ensure training and awareness in good work techniques.
- Ensure sufficient access to aids and adapted tools. Factors such as shape, size, weight and balance are decisive.
- Allow for individual measures.

Employee responsibilities

- Switch between right and left hands.
- Switch between different grips
- Take frequent micro-breaks.
- Use good tools and aids.
- Use the correct gloves for the task.
- Request training if you require it.
- Participate in job rotation.
- If you regularly engage in strength and endurance training, you will develop a solid foundation for a long and healthy work life.



Machinery and crane work involve repetitive movements. More and more tasks are being solved via the use of computers. Always adapt your workplace to your needs.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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HEALTH CARD

Working while bending forward

We should only work for short periods while bending forward

Working in a forward-bent position involves bending or leaning forward, such as when raking, tiling, or tying reinforcing mesh on the floor.

Repetitive work while bending forward or over lengthy periods of time involves heavy muscle work. Lifting objects over 10 kg increases the risk of overstraining your muscles more quickly.

Risk assessment

- Assess how often and for how long work is to be performed while bending forward.
- Assess whether tools are used or lifting is performed while working in this position.
- Assess whether there are better/other ways of completing the task.

Threshold values

The work is repeated a few times per hour.

The work is repeated many times per hour There are limited opportunities to vary work positions and stand upright.

The work is repeated many times per minute.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Facilitate other work methods/production methods that reduce time working while bending forward.
- Plan the workday and ensure job rotation and variation in tasks performed.
- Provide training in good work techniques and facilitate individual measures.
- Ensure that tools with extensions are available where possible – and also consider the weight of the tools.

Employee responsibilities

- Try to work in upright positions and use alternative work methods.
- Frequently vary work position.
- Make sure to stand as close as possible to the task so that your body is not far from the work being performed.
- Support yourself with one hand if possible.
- If you regularly engage in strength and endurance training, you will develop a solid foundation for a long and healthy work life.

The forward-bent position gets the job done. However, if we work in this position often or for a long time, we should plan for variation and choose the correct tools.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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HEALTH CARD

Sedentary work

Do you only perform work tasks while in a sitting position? Make sure you move around during the workday. Note that prolonged sitting is sedentary and doesn't provide enough movement for the muscles and thus is a risk factor for lifestyle diseases.

Risk assessment

- Assess the duration of continuous sedentary work.
- Assess the total amount of sedentary work.
- Assess whether the sedentary work involves movement and variation.
- Assess the possibility for breaks.
- Refer to in conjunction with vision requirements and requirements for fixed/ locked neck/head positions.
- Refer to in conjunction with the working environment - psychosocial and organisational.

Threshold values

Less than 30 consecutive minutes.
In total, less than four hours per workday.

30-60 consecutive minutes. A total of four to eight hours per workday.

More than 60 consecutive minutes.
A total of over 8 hours per workday.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Plan for variation and opportunities to move around for all employees.
- Provide clear information about how long one should perform work that is static or lacks movement.
- Reduce the amount of time spent in a sitting position.

Employee responsibilities

- Ensure variation – actively seek opportunities to vary work positions, movements, walking/ standing, breaks, rotation, etc.
- Help reduce the amount of time spent in a sitting position.
- If you regularly engage in strength and endurance training, you will develop a solid foundation for a long and healthy work life.

You may spend a lot of sitting in the office, so take advantage of opportunities to stretch your legs, such as when talking with a colleague or getting a cup of coffee.

The best sitting position is the next one. The body is made for movement. If you need to talk to someone, take the opportunity to step out of your machine.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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HEALTH CARD

Working with your hands above shoulder height

Work that takes place above shoulder height must always be planned

When working with your hands above shoulder height, strain is placed on the shoulder joints. The risk increases when working at an angle greater than 60 degrees above our heads, and involving factors such as frequency, distance, duration, and the use of tools. This exposure increases the risk of musculoskeletal pain. With a good plan, we can ensure that we stay within the limits of what our bodies can tolerate.

Risk assessment

- Assess how high, how long, and how often work is carried out with hands/arms elevated.
- Assess how close to the body the work is carried out.
- Assess the weight of any tools being used. Heavier tools increase the strain.
- Assess how much elbows and wrists are bent and twisted.

Threshold values

A few times or short duration: Less than one hour per day and less than 15 consecutive minutes.

Periodically: 15-30 consecutive minutes and a total of 1-2 hours per day.

More than 30 minutes at a time or over half the working day in total. Heavy tools.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Choose production methods that reduce the duration and frequency of work above shoulder height.
- Plan with variation and job rotation.
- Provide aids such as platform ladders, scaffolding and lifts.
- Provide tools that reduce the working height of the arms, such as extension arms, longer handles, etc. Assess whether lighter tools are available.
- Ensure training in good work techniques and task execution.

Employee responsibilities

- Make sure you stand in the best possible working position (work as close as possible to the work task).
- Use available aids and tools where possible: Platform ladders, scaffolding, lifts and extension tools.
- Think about variation, be curious, and participate.
- Take frequent micro-breaks (seconds) where you lower your arms and put down heavy tools.

Lifts and platform ladders are examples of equipment that facilitate work above shoulder height while increasing efficiency and safety.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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HEALTH CARD

Work while standing or walking

Work that involves standing or walking without rest can place excessive strain on the body

Strain increases when the surface/substrate is hard, unstable, uneven or slippery. Lifting and particularly carrying further increases the strain. Over time, this can cause health problems for some people. Feet, knees, hips and back are especially at risk.

Prolonged standing work reduces blood circulation in the legs and applies constant pressure to the feet. This can lead to tiredness and leg pain.

Risk assessment

- Assess how much standing and walking employees do.
- Assess the substrate.
- Assess whether employees need to carry things while walking.
- Assess whether employees have adequate safety shoes.
- Assess whether employees have the opportunity to switch between sitting, walking and standing work.

Threshold values

- Less than 30 consecutive minutes. In total, less than four hours per workday.
- 30-60 consecutive minutes. A total of four to eight hours per workday.
- More than 60 consecutive minutes. A total of over 8 hours per workday.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Use of anti-fatigue mats at standing workstations.
- Facilitate short breaks.
- Good access to safety shoes and cushioned soles.
- Opportunity for relief – through varied work positions, e.g. sitting.

Employee responsibilities

- Participate in the planning of walking and standing work.
- Use of anti-fatigue mats.
- Choose safety shoes and cushioned soles that fit well - change soles and shoes before they become worn out.
- Sit down and rest when possible.
- If you regularly engage in strength and endurance training, you will develop a solid foundation for a long and healthy work life.

Your body needs variation in order to function optimally. Long periods of standing or walking work can be a challenge.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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HEALTH CARD

Heavy lifting and carrying

Good logistics and planning reduce heavy lifting and carrying

Heavy lifting means individual lifts or more than 20-25 kg. The whole body is used when lifting and carrying heavy objects. Many years of work involving heavy lifting and carrying can cause musculoskeletal pain.

Physical exercise is always a good thing. We need to undergo a certain amount of physical strain in order to keep our bodies in good condition, and we tolerate different types of physical strain. The body adapts to the strain it is subjected to, if it occurs gradually. If we lift something too heavy, too often and without adaptation, our bodies will react. We should avoid lifting objects that are 25 kg or more and carrying things over longer distances.

Risk assessment

- Assess the weight of the objects being lifted.
- Assess how many times lifting is carried out during the workday.
- Assess the shape and size of the object being lifted.
- Assess the extent to which heavy lifts occur to/from ground level or to/from high up.

Threshold values

Individual lift under 15 kg. Total daily weight less than 3 tons.

Individual lift between 15-25 kg. Total daily weight 3-6 tons. Carrying 5-20 metres.

Individual lift over 25 kg. Total daily weight over 6 tons and carrying over 20 metres. The height and distance from the body at which lifting occurs are crucial factors.

Pay attention to individual differences.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Plan for use of aids such as elevators, cranes, lifts and trolleys.
- Ensure good logistics: What needs to be done and when in order to gain access with lifting equipment.
- Assess the weight and shape of material when renting or purchasing.
- Ensure that materials are placed as close as possible to where the assembly/installation/work is to take place.
- Ensure adequate number of employees where lifting and carrying must take place manually.
- Facilitate rotation when work involves many heavy lifts and a lot of carrying.
- Ensure that the surface/substrate is level and even.

We can't avoid manual lifting. However, try to replace lifting and carrying with pulling and pushing, or allow machines to do the job for you where possible.

Employee responsibilities

- Where possible, always use a trolley or similar equipment instead of carrying.
- Use available aids when lifting. Request help when lifting heavy/difficult objects.
- Think before you lift – keep objects close to your body when lifting and make two trips instead of one.
- If you regularly engage in strength and endurance training, you will develop a solid foundation for a long and healthy work life.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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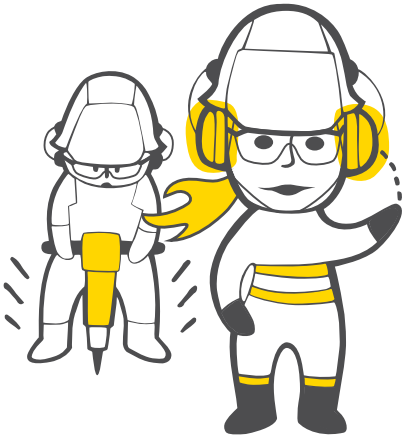
HEALTH CARD

Noise

Hearing damage is permanent



Noise is unwanted sound that is measured in decibels (dB). There are two types of hearing damage: acute damage caused by short-term intense noise, and damage that occurs over time in areas where the noise is above the threshold values. Hearing damage is permanent and can be a difficult ailment to live with. Background noise can also negatively affect the body, such as causing irritation, inducing stress, and affecting foetuses. The most important thing is to reduce the noise.

Remember, you can avoid injury by using hearing protection. We must plan, organise, and carry out tasks based on the knowledge we have about the noise levels we are exposed to while working.

Risk assessment

- Assess noise levels the employees are exposed to.
- Assess the need for noise measurements. Contact the Occupational Health Service for assistance.
- Assess for how long time employees are exposed to noise.
- Check the noise level labelling on machines and tools.
- Ensure adequate knowledge about noise.

Threshold values

Everyone is familiar with the noise level in their work environment and protects their hearing with appropriate hearing protection.

Only some people know the noise level in their work environment and employees occasionally protect their hearing with random hearing protection.

Little knowledge about noise, and hearing protection is not used.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Remove the noise source if possible.
- Consider alternative work methods that reduce noise exposure.
- Choose appropriate work equipment that produces the least amount of noise.
- Insulate/enclose the noise source.
- Increase the distance between employees and noise source.
- Ensure systematic maintenance of work equipment and tools.
- Install hazard signs at the entrances to noisy areas to raise employee awareness of noise exposure.
- Organise the work by limiting exposure time with adequate periods of noise-free intervals.
- Ensure that hearing protection with adequate attenuation is available.

Use the appropriate hearing protection according to the conditions. Double hearing protection may be necessary.

Employee responsibilities

- Increase the distance from the noise source.
- Notify colleagues about noisy work.
- Wear correct personal hearing protection and ensure proper maintenance.
- Remember that the auditory cells in your ears also need to take a break every now and then!
- Be aware that noise during leisure time is in addition to the noise you are exposed to at work (e.g. concerts).
- Report any potential damage/injury.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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HEALTH CARD

Dust

Dust masks provide protection against hazardous dust

The term dust refers to airborne particles. Dust is formed in connection with the processing of materials or products, such as sawing, grinding, drilling and demolition. Dust particles vary in size, shape, and composition. Dust can affect mucous membranes in the respiratory tract, causing acute inflammatory conditions such as bronchitis and pneumonia. Over time, the prolonged inhalation of dust can lead to chronic lung disease, and the type and amount of dust determines the severity of any potential health effects. If it is not possible to reduce the concentration of dust in the air to acceptable levels, protective dust masks must be used. Dust masks do not provide protection against gases; see the relevant health card.

Risk assessment

- Assess which work processes that produce dust.
- Identify the type of dust being formed.
- Assess how long and how much employees are exposed to dust.
- Assess possible effects on skin and eyes.

Threshold values

All work processes have been assessed, protective measures have been implemented and non-conformities are exceptions.

Work processes have been poorly assessed, measures have non-conformities.

No work processes have been assessed, no user protection or reports of non-conformities.

cf. 'Regulations on action and threshold values'.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

Measures are listed in order of priority. The following measures must always be implemented before using protective equipment:

- Try to reduce dust dispersion by enclosing dust-generating processes.
- Obtaining equipment with built-in dust extraction.
- Installing extractors if required.
- Facilitating the use of water to bind dust.
- Ensuring that the correct type of dust masks are available and checking they are maintained.
- Ensuring that tight-fitting safety goggles are available where eye protection is necessary.

Employee responsibilities

- Use equipment with built-in dust extraction
- Use water to bind dust where possible
- Use the correct type of dust mask whenever necessary
- Ensure good maintenance and cleaning of dust masks.
- Report any potential damage/injury.

Good planning, organisation and execution of work where dust is generated are necessary to avoid hazardous exposure.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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HEALTH CARD

Gases

Protect yourself from hazardous gases

Gas consists of molecules in the air, and the concentration is most often measured in ppm (parts per million). Some gases are harmless, some can cause acute health effects, and others can lead to long-term health damage. How harmful the gas is depends on its concentration and type. The presence of harmful gases in a working environment must be assessed and documented. This is done using gas meters.
Examples of work operations and working environments where one can be exposed to gases are:

- Tunnelling work
- Blasting work
- Work involving chemicals
- Work in tanks and enclosed spaces
- Hot work (see relevant health card)
- Work close to emissions from combustion engines
- Work in areas where biological material is decomposing

Risk assessment

- Assess and document hazardous and flammable gases.
- Assess which processes the gas is used or formed in, and whether it is an open or closed process.
- Assess the extent to which employees are exposed to the gas(es).
- Assess whether you need assistance from the Occupational Health Service.

Threshold values

All hazardous gases have been assessed, protective measures have been implemented and non-conformities are exceptions.

Hazardous gases have been poorly assessed, measures have non-conformities.

No hazardous gases have been assessed, no user protection or reports of non-conformities.

cf. 'Regulations on action and threshold values'.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Reduce exposure to below threshold value.
- Assess possibilities of closing open processes to prevent exposure.
- Select the correct type of filter for the gas in question.
- Ensure supply of fresh air where gas masks are unsuitable.

Employee responsibilities

- Reduce exposure; use methods to close open processes and wear protective equipment where necessary.
- Use the correct filter; replace filter in accordance with guidelines.
- Regularly check that masks are in working order.

Ensure fully responsible risk management and barriers when we work with gases.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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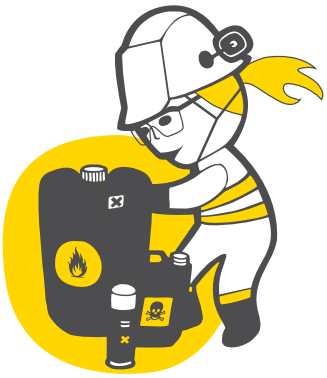
HEALTH CARD

Chemicals

Some chemicals are very harmful to health – assess the risk of all of them



Chemicals can be liquids, powders or gases such as gasoline, oils, cleaning agents and paints/lacquers. The products are industrially manufactured. Chemical compounds can also be formed through various processes and work methods.

All chemicals are potentially harmful to health. They affect the body through the lungs, skin and gastrointestinal tract. The amount and duration of exposure determine whether health damage occurs. We can suffer acute injuries or injuries as a result of long-term exposure.

Examples of the health effect of chemicals can include:

- Allergies and hypersensitivity.
- Irritation of eyes, skin and respiratory system.
- Acute chemical burns to the eyes, skin and respiratory system.
- Nerve or brain damage as a result of exposure to solvents.
- Cancer in organs.
- Impaired reproductive capacity and birth defects.
- In the worst case, death.

All chemicals have their own safety data sheet that can be found in the chemical management system. Pay particular attention to sections 1 - 4, 7 and 8 on the safety data sheet.

Risk assessment

- All chemicals must be risk assessed.
- Assess how the products are used.
- Assess whether open or closed processes are involved.
- Assess if the product contains volatile organic solvents.
- Assess which chemicals are most harmful to health.
- Assess how long and how much employees are exposed to the products.
- Assess whether other chemical substances are formed as a result of the work process.

Threshold values

All chemicals have been assessed, substitution assessment is carried out continuously, protective measures have been implemented and non-conformities are exceptions.

Some chemicals have been assessed, measures have non-conformities.

No chemicals have been assessed, no user protection or reports of non-conformities.

cf. ‘Regulations on action and threshold values’.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Reduce the use of chemicals in all situations where possible.
- If possible, use other chemicals that pose a lower health risk (substitution assessment).
- Try to facilitate closed processes to prevent exposure.
- Provide training in the correct use of chemicals, protective equipment and safety data sheets.
- Procure the required protective equipment.

Employee responsibilities

- Read the safety data sheets of chemicals you work with.
- Participate in training on the correct use of chemicals, protective equipment, and safety data sheets.
- Use protective equipment whenever necessary.
- Take good care of protective equipment.
- Properly dispose of chemical products that are not in use.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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HEALTH CARD

Hot work

Hot work releases hazardous substances into air – use the correct mask and filter

Hot work refers to operations where materials are heated to the point where they change characteristics. Examples of hot work may be welding, cutting, burning and soldering. Grinding, sanding and cutting can have the same effect because friction against a surface generates heat. Hot work generates dust and gases. This can happen even at relatively low temperatures. Dust and gases from hot work can be irritating and/or harmful to health, affecting both short-term and long-term health.

Acute health effects may include irritation to the airways, bronchitis and pneumonia. Over time, hot work can lead to chronic lung diseases, allergic eczema, kidney diseases, neurological disorders and cancer.

Risk assessment

- Assess the composition of the material on which hot work will be performed.
- Assess which types of gases and dust will be formed.
- Assess which fuel gases will be used.
- Assess which temperatures will be used during the hot work.
- Assess whether peripheral personnel will be exposed to dust or gases from the work.
- Assess whether a fresh air mask is necessary to safeguard the health of employees.

Threshold values

Hot work is risk assessed, protective measures are implemented and non-conformities are exceptions.

Some hot work is risk assessed, measures have non-conformities.

Hot work is not risk assessed, no measures or use of protection, and non-conformities are common.

cf. ‘Regulations on action and threshold values’.

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Use alternative methods, for example cold cutting, if possible.
- Use extraction to reduce the amount of dust and gases.
- If possible, shield/enclose the work operations so that peripheral personnel are not exposed.
- Make sure that the necessary and correct filters are available, consider testing masks for filtration performance.
- Facilitate good maintenance procedures for protective equipment.
- The occupational health service should be consulted when using dust and gas masks.

Employee responsibilities

- Use extraction where available.
- Use the correct protective equipment.
- Choose the correct filter according to the exposure.
- Dust and gas mask filters must be replaced regularly. Replacement interval for filters is determined by usage.

Ensure a good risk assessment and suitable protective equipment during hot work.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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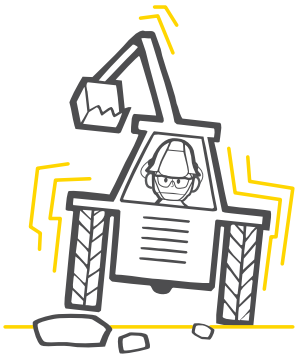
HEALTH CARD

Whole-body vibration

Good planning can reduce back pain for machine operators

Whole-body vibrations refer to mechanical vibrations that are transmitted to the entire body from things such as vehicles or machines. Refer to this health card in conjunction with the health card about sedentary work. Intense vibrations have a greater impact on back pain than minor vibrations over a longer period. The most effective approach is therefore to eliminate vibrations at the source, such as uneven surfaces for vehicles.



Risk assessment

- Identify exposed employees.
- Assess how intense the vibrations are (surface and work task).
- Assess how long employees are exposed.
- Assess the overall picture: Whether the correct machine is being used, as well as working conditions in and around the machine (seat and ground conditions).

Threshold values

Daily exposure less than 0.5 m/s² (8-hour workday).

Daily exposure between 0.5 and 1.1 m/s² (8-hour workday).

Daily exposure over 1.1 m/s² (8-hour workday).

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Ensure machines are equipped with tires or tracks suitable for the surface.
- Adapt the surface to the work being performed.
- Use machines with vibration damping and good seat adjustment options.
- Focus on the speed of the vehicle and good driving technique.
- Ensure maintenance and regular service of machinery.
- Reduce exposure time by scheduling breaks and if possible, job rotation.

Employee responsibilities

- Adjust the driver's seat and ensure that the seat's pressure and suspension are in order.
- Ensure comfortable floor/pedal spacing by adjusting seat height.
- Use good driving techniques, adjust the driving speed in relation to the surface, and drive on smooth surfaces where possible.

The most intense vibrations can cause discomfort, and avoiding them requires planning collaboration.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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HEALTH CARD

Hand and arm vibration

Vibrations can cause damage to blood vessels and nerves in the hands

Handheld tools transmit vibrations to hands and arms. Examples include angle grinders, jackhammers, bolt guns, and drills. The vibrations pose a risk of damage to blood vessels, nerves, muscles, and joints. Symptoms develop gradually, from numbness and tingling to white fingers, pain, and reduced strength and control.

The vibration level is indicated in the tool data sheet. An online vibration calculator can be used to calculate daily exposure. Intense vibrations have a greater impact on the development of ailments than minor vibrations over a longer period. The most effective approach is to reduce vibrations at the source. Be aware that the same type of tool can have different vibration levels.

Risk assessment

- Assess the vibration level of available tools.
- Assess typical work tasks where the tool is used.
- Assess external conditions (temperature and humidity).
- Assess the number of work operations and/or the time the tool is used.
- If the employer or employees are unsure about the vibration level, the Occupational Health Service can be contacted.

Threshold values

- 8-hour workday less than 2.5 m/s².
- 12-hour workday less than 2.0 m/s².

- 8-hour workday between 2.5 and 5.0 m/s².
- 12-hour workday between 2.0 m/s² to 4.1 m/s².

- 8-hour workday over 5.0 m/s².
- 12-hour workday over 4.1 m/s².

Risk mitigation measures

Supervisor responsibilities

- Consider alternative work methods and tools.
- Provide equipment-specific training.
- Mark tools with red, yellow and green labels (see threshold values).
- Ensure maintenance and regular service of tools.
- Schedule breaks and job rotation to reduce exposure.

Employee responsibilities

- Switch between right and left hands.
- Let the tool do the job - guide, do not hold.
- Wear the correct gloves - ensure warm and dry hands, avoid cold handles.
- Request training if required.
- Be aware that nicotine reduces blood circulation in the hands and increases the risk of vibration injuries.
- Refer to this health card in conjunction with the health card on repetitive arm and hand movements.

Numbness and tingling in the hands are signs of the risk of vibration injuries.

For more information, see the Occupational Health Service at Tellus.

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