



Toolbox Talk

Introduction to

Work-related Health in Construction

This project has been delivered with support from the CITB Growth Fund, which aims to ensure that the construction industry has the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time and is equipped to meet the future skills demands of the industry.

What is work related ill health?

An illness or symptom caused by something that you do, or come into contact with, while you are at work

What can cause it?

- » Dust or working with chemicals you can breathe in
- » Noise
- » Manual handling
- » Contact with skin irritants
- » Working with vibrating tools
- » Other things such as:
 - working in a dirty or contaminated environment
 - working with lead



What should your employer do?

- » Your employer has a duty of care to prevent you becoming ill through the work you do, they should:
 - Carry out a risk assessment of the hazards and risks you may be exposed to, and:
 - Implement control measures to prevent you becoming ill

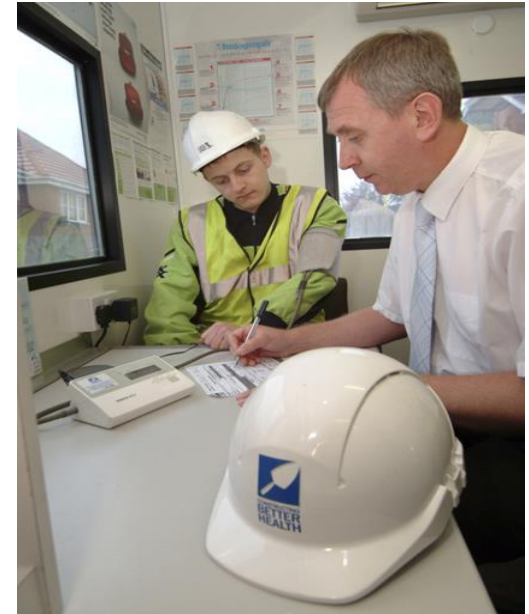


Will you need a health check?

Maybe - if you are still being exposed to the hazard

For example if your job involves working with:

- » Vibrating tools
- » Noise
- » Skin irritants
- » Certain types of dust
- » Asbestos
- » Lead
- » Lifting
- » Safety critical tasks



Who carries out health checks?

» In most cases health checks will be carried out by an Occupational Health Practitioner:

- OH Doctor
- OH Nurse Advisor
- OH Technician or
- Simple checks may be undertaken by a Responsible person in some cases



What happens during a health check?

- » You will be asked to give consent
- » You should be able to talk, in confidence
- » You will be asked to complete a questionnaire



Work related health checks

Examples of the types of health checks you may be asked to have by your employer:

- » Hearing Test
- » Lung Function Test
- » Skin Checks
- » Musculoskeletal Assessment
- » Hand Arm Vibration Screening
- » Safety Critical – ‘Fitness for Task’:
 - Body Mass Index
 - Blood Pressure
 - Urine Test – Sugar, Protein & Blood
 - Eyesight Test



Why?

- » Because **your** employer has a duty of care to protect **you** from being made ill through your work



- » Because **you** also have a duty to co-operate with your employer where your health or safety is concerned

What about the health check?

You'll be given an explanation and instructions

- » **Hearing test (audiometry)** – involving wearing special ear muffs and pressing a button when you hear it beep
- » **Lung function test (spirometry)** – blowing into a special tube, as demonstrated

If you do not understand the instruction, please ask!



What will your employer be told?

- » What health surveillance has been done and when
- » Whether there are any recommendations
- » If a referral to an OH Doctor is advisable
- » When the health checks should be repeated
- » Whether the control measures need reviewing
- » **Your employer will NOT receive any medically confidential information**

What if they find something wrong?

They may advise:

- » Further investigations
- » Certain restrictions on the tasks you do
- » Make sure you always wear your PPE
- » The site / employer to review the control measures



What if they find something wrong?

If available, and with your employer's agreement, you may benefit from:

- » A phased return to work
- » Altered hours
- » Amended duties
- » Workplace adaptations

Make an appointment with your GP if you are concerned about your health

- » Or visit your local pharmacy
- » Or visit NHS Choices website
- » Or ring Constructing Better Health for a confidential chat / advice on **0845 873 7726**



What does CBH do?

Industry Standards

- » Advising your employer which work related health assessments are appropriate for the tasks you are doing

Card scheme

- » Allowing on site and employer access to 'fitness for task' information – NOT medical data

