



Toolbox Talk

Vibration

Health Risks 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.

Hazards and Risks

- » Regular use of high vibration power tools (hand arm vibration syndrome or HAVS)
- » Some types of construction vehicles - when driven regularly for most of the day (whole-body vibration or WBV)



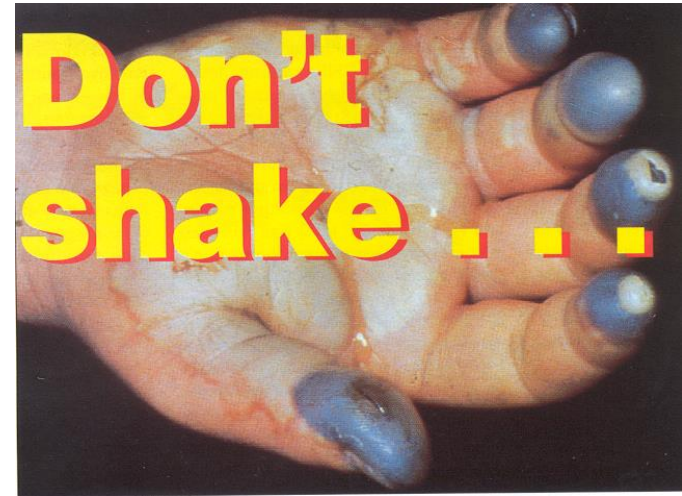
Risks - HAVS

Can permanently affect blood circulation and nervous system:

- » Fingers, Arms, Hands, Back

You are more at risk if:

- » You get cold and wet
- » You have to grip tightly
- » The equipment is awkward for you to use
- » Equipment is poorly maintained, e.g. drill bit not sharp



The warning signs for HAVS

- » Pins and needles and/or numbness in your fingers
- » The tips of your fingers may go white
- » When returning to a warm room after being out in the cold, your hands may go red and feel really painful



What should you do?

- » Keep tools / equipment maintained
- » Use low vibration tools wherever possible
- » Keep your hands and body warm
- » Take regular breaks, or change task often
- » Limit the time that vibrating equipment is used for



» Tiered system for checking for HAVS

- 1) An initial check questionnaire
- 2) An annual check questionnaire
- 3) Clinical assessment to check symptoms like whiteness, tingling or numbness of any fingers.
- 4) Diagnosis by a Doctor



» It's a good idea to take a photograph on your mobile phone if you do notice your fingers going white after using vibrating tools

Risks - WBV

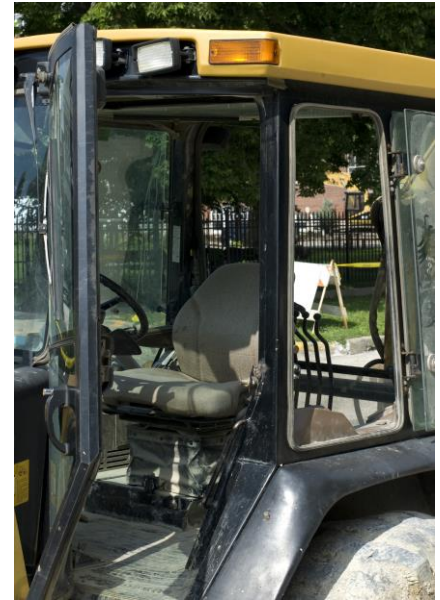
- » Regular long term exposure to WBV is associated with **back pain** along with other things like poor posture and heavy lifting.

(It is not yet clear how much of this is actually due to WBV)



Warning signs

- » Prolonged exposure which can lead to considerable back pain
- » Although back pain is more commonly caused by:
 - Poor design or adjustment of seating or controls
 - Poor driver posture
 - Long periods in seat
 - Manual handling of loads
 - Awkward access to or jumping from cab
 - Non-occupational causes



Prevention

- » Driver to take action to protect own health
- » Use a more suitable vehicle?
- » Regular vehicle maintenance
- » Safer site
- » Maintenance of roadways/operating surfaces on and around site



Back pain should be monitored by using an annual questionnaire.

» If you need help with it please ask





**ANY
QUESTIONS?**

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