

Protection of skin

Prepare: Quiet location? No distractions? Talk aids ready?

Reason: Dermatitis accounts for over half of all working days lost through industrial sickness

Why: Some types of dermatitis, if not treated can lead to cancer.

Outline: This talk will cover hazards to skin and precautions to protect your skin.



Contact hazards to skin

- Mineral oils, including fuel oils and mould oils, can give you bad skin conditions, oil acne or even cancer.
- Skin contact with oily rags in overall pockets can cause testicular cancer.
- Chemicals including alkalis, acids and chromates can penetrate the skin causing ulcers and dermatitis.
- Cement can cause chronic dermatitis; wet cement becomes more alkaline and more harmful to the skin.

Q: What hazards are there from contact with mineral oil?

- Solvents and de-greasers, including paraffin and thinners, dissolve natural oils in skin leaving it open to infection.
- Tar, pitch and bitumen products cause blisters and oil acne. They can also cause tar warts, leading to cancer.
- Epoxy-resin hardeners, glass fibre, some hardwoods and fungicides irritate the skin and can lead to dermatitis.
- Extremes of sunshine, temperature and humidity make the skin more susceptible to dermatitis and other skin problems.

Q: What effect do solvents have on your skin?

Precautions to protect your skin

- Avoid skin contact with hazardous substances.
- Wear the correct personal protective equipment.
- Keep your skin clean and use after wash skin cream.
- Keep your workplace clean.
- Get first aid for cuts and grazes and keep them covered.

NOTES

[illegible]

TOOLBOX TALK #34

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NOTES

Q: What can you wear to protect your skin?

- Do not use abrasives or solvents to clean your skin
- Do not let synthetic resins or glue harden on your skin
- Examine your skin for the appearance of warts, especially on the scrotum (if applicable)
- Never wear oil contaminated clothes next to your skin.
- Too much exposure to the sun can cause skin cancer.

Q: If you notice rashes or warts what would you do?

NOTE TO SUPERVISOR:

Now inform your workforce of the company policy regarding skin care.

Do you have any questions for me?

Questions for you

Q: What should you not be used to clean your skin?

Q: How can exposure to the sun affect you?

REMEMBER

If you notice a rash or warts, see your family doctor immediately.

Sources: [Skin at work - HSE](#) [Health and Safety: Outdoor workers and sun exposure](#)
[Using personal protective equipment \(PPE\) to control risks at work: Using the right type of PPE - HSE](#)

For more information

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