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Weekly Safety Tip

Life Is All About Choices![®]

October 23, 2017

SCI Safety Tip: Understanding occupational asthma

Source: <http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com>

Date: April 15, 2015 / September 24, 2017



Atlanta – More than 15 percent of asthma cases among employed adults are work-related, according to a [report](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In its report, CDC analyzed data from phone surveys in 22 states. An estimated 12 million adults in those states had asthma, and 15.7 percent (1.9 million) had work-related asthma.

CDC said the findings could provide a baseline for additional research regarding the scope of work-related asthma and prevention strategies for the disease.

“These new, improved results can assist states, other government agencies, health professionals, employers, workers and worker representatives to prioritize disease intervention and prevention efforts to reduce the burden of WRA,” the report states.

According to OSHA, about 11 million workers are exposed to at least one asthma-related risk factor while on the job. The agency says [work-related asthma](#) may emerge in a matter of days or a number of years,

SCI Safety Slogan



James Lehrke - SCI

and protective equipment such as a respirator or exhaust ventilation system does not preclude all workers from developing the disease.

The study was published in the April 10 edition of CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Occupational asthma is a respiratory disease in which on-the-job exposure to certain substances causes the airways of a person's lungs to swell and narrow.

Workers who may be affected include metal workers, agricultural workers, laboratory workers, health care workers, and detergent manufacturers, according to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology.

Although the exact number of workers who have occupational asthma is unknown, up to 15 percent of asthma cases in the United States may be job-related, the academy states.

Many substances found in workplaces can trigger asthma symptoms or an asthma attack. These substances include wood and grain dust, chemicals, fungi, and animal dander. A person having an asthma attack may feel chest tightness or shortness of breath, or may wheeze or cough.

"Often, your symptoms are worse during the days or nights you work, improve when you have time off, and start again when you go back to work," AAAAI notes. However, some workers may not show any symptoms until 12 or more hours after exposure to an allergen.

Treatment

Workers who suspect they have occupational asthma should make an appointment with their health care provider.

Anyone diagnosed with occupational asthma should work with his or her employer to avoid exposure to the substance(s) that trigger asthma. Measures include:

- Moving to a different jobsite location that has reduced exposure to the asthma-triggering substance(s)
- Wearing respiratory protection

SCI OSHA News: OSHA issues interim enforcement guidance on silica standard for construction

Source: <http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com>

Date: October 20, 2017

Washington – OSHA has released [interim enforcement guidance](#) for its [Respirable Crystalline Silica in Construction Standard](#) (1926.1153), which is set to be enforced in full on Oct. 23.

The guidance was issued Oct. 19 in a memorandum to OSHA regional administrators from Patrick Kapust, deputy director of the agency's Directorate of Enforcement Programs. RAs should use the guidance to help them gauge whether employers meet various requirements, including those





11 tips to help men live a healthier life

- 1 **Mental health**
Short term? Feeling "on edge"? You may be depressed. Depression often shows up this way - and not as sadness - in men. If you're just not yourself, see someone who can help.
- 2 **Heart health**
Heart disease is the leading cause of death in men. Improve your odds: stay active, eat right, keep a healthy weight and don't smoke. Get your cholesterol, blood pressure and sugar checked. It can help you live longer and feel better.
- 3 **Tobacco use**
Smoking increases your risk for lung cancer, COPD, and heart disease. (And stains your teeth and makes your breath stink.) See your doctor for help quitting.
- 4 **Hydration**
Your body needs the right fluids for peak performance. Drink at least eight glasses of water a day. Avoid sodas and sugared drinks. Limit alcohol to 2 drinks/day and 14 drinks/week (less is even healthier).
- 5 **Cholesterol**
High cholesterol clogs your blood vessels, increasing your risk for heart attacks and strokes. Get a blood test to check your level. If it's high, your doctor can help you control cholesterol with medication and lifestyle changes.
- 6 **Sexual health**
Good function starts with a healthy body and mind. A lacking libido may signal an underlying health issue like high blood pressure or diabetes. See your doctor if things aren't going well.
- 7 **Blood pressure**
One in three adults has high blood pressure. It makes your heart work extra hard and increases your risk of stroke or heart failure. Have your blood pressure checked regularly and take any prescribed medications daily.
- 8 **Nutrition**
It's true: you are what you eat. A healthy diet, rich in vegetables, fruits, lean meats, whole grains and healthy fats and oils, can help keep you feeling and looking good. Avoid fried foods, junk food and sugar-laden snacks.
- 9 **Blood sugar**
High blood sugar puts you at risk for diabetes, blindness, kidney problems and heart attacks. A blood test can tell if your sugar level is too high.
- 10 **Physical activity**
Your body needs at least 2 1/2 hours of heart-pumping exercise each week. (More is even better.) Regular exercise builds strong bones, keeps your blood pressure and sugar lower, and even helps you fight off germs.
- 11 **Sleep**
Getting less than seven hours of sleep a night weakens your immune system, makes you sluggish, affects your sexual prowess and can even trigger weight gain. Many men don't get the required seven to eight hours needed to wake refreshed.

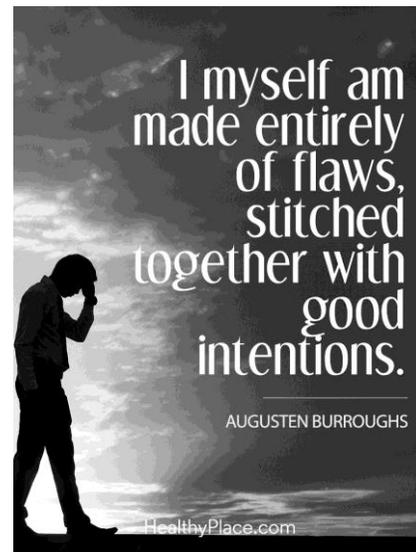
for inspections and avoiding citations. The guidance also provides flow charts for evaluating employer methods of controlling worker exposure to silica.

The document "does not provide guidance on all of the standard's provisions," the memo states, adding that a final compliance directive is in the review process.

The standard establishes a new permissible exposure limit for respirable crystalline silica at 50 micrograms per cubic meter of air averaged during an 8-hour shift. That PEL is five times lower than the previous limit for construction.

A known carcinogen, respirable crystalline silica is found in commonly used construction materials, such as sand, concrete, brick, stone and mortar. Exposure to silica dust can trigger silicosis, a chronic disease that involves scarring of the lungs. OSHA estimate that 2.3 million workers, including 2 million construction workers, are exposed to the dust.

The standard went into effect Sept. 23 after an [earlier delay](#). However, OSHA granted an [additional 30 days](#) to comply to employers found to be acting in "good faith" to meet the new requirements.



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In Loving Memory...
Jessica, Kristin and Nick

