

Toolbox Talk

Vibrating Equipment



What?

- Vibration is a series of mechanical oscillations at a frequency and magnitude that may be cyclic, random or a mixture of both
- The frequency and magnitude may differ between slow frequency high displacements to ultra high frequency oscillations of low displacement and is similar to pressure waves and felt as movement
- “Whole Body Vibration” as the name suggests affects the whole body and is usually experienced when undertaking operations such as driving heavy vehicles or operating machinery where the equipment itself vibrates which is then transmitted through the body
- “Hand and Arm Vibration” is where the vibration is transmitted into hands and arms when using certain types of tools such as angle grinders, hammer drills, pneumatic tools, demolition hammers, torque wrenches etc.



Why?

- Whole body vibration may affect your vision, cause back pains, headaches, joint problems and can aggravate pre-existing injuries and cause further pain
- Repeated hand and arm vibration can lead to vibration ‘white finger’ which is a very painful condition which can lead to debilitating and permanent impairment
- The initial symptoms are tingling in the fingers and hands after using the equipment and if left to go unchecked will develop into “white finger” over a period of time with the condition getting progressively worse



Do



- ✓ Report signs & symptoms
- ✓ Follow the manufacturer’s operating instructions when using vibrating tools
- ✓ Use and maintain equipment properly
- ✓ Clearly establish how long equipment should be used before taking breaks or rest periods
- ✓ Ensure any rest period is sufficient
- ✓ Calculate the total length of time when using different types of vibrating equipment
- ✓ Arrange for users to rota the work to reduce the total exposure for each user
- ✓ Report health issues if you experience any signs or symptoms such as tingling
- ✓ Check vibration levels of new equipment to ensure they reduce the risk to operators
- ✓ Wear suitable PPE to minimise the effects of vibration such as padded gloves etc.

Don't



- ✗ Ignore the effects of vibration on the hands or body
- ✗ Skip breaks or rota periods
- ✗ Misuse equipment
- ✗ Ignore maintenance schedules or equipment inspections since this helps to reduce the risk
- ✗ Let equipment performance deteriorate or vibration to progressively increase during use
- ✗ Use equipment without wearing suitable PPE
- ✗ Aggravate an existing health condition
- ✗ Use damaged equipment, always report defects