



Hand-Arm Vibration Toolbox Talk

- **Hand-Arm Vibration is vibration transmitted into your hands and arms when using hand-held powered work equipment.**
- **Too much exposure to Hand-Arm Vibration can cause;**
 - **Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)**
 - **Vibration White Finger**
 - **Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.**
- **HAVS affect the Nerves, Blood Vessels, Muscles and Joints of the Hand, Wrist and Arm and can become severely disabling if ignored.**
- **Early symptoms include;**
 - **Tingling and Numbness in the Fingers**
 - **Pins and Needles**
 - **Not being able to feel things properly**
 - **Loss of strength in your hands**
 - **Tips of your Fingers going White then Red**
- **Tools which cause HAVS include; Grinders, Chainsaws, Hedge Trimmers, Powered Mowers, Hammer Drills, Demolition Hammers, Floor Saws and Strimmers.**

To reduce the risks follow this advice:

- **Follow the instructions given during training sessions**
- **Use low-vibration tools**
- **Choose the right tool for the job – don't take short-cuts**
- **Ensure tools are properly maintained**
- **Do not use defective tools**
- **Report defects or faults immediately**
- **Cutting tools should be sharp**
- **Reduce the time spent on vibrating tools by varying your tasks**
- **Don't grip or force a tool more than is necessary**
- **Keep warm and dry**
- **Wear gloves at all times**
- **Waterproofs should be worn when appropriate**
- **Massage and exercise your Fingers during work breaks**
- **Smoking affects Blood flow – give up now!**

Equipment is assessed by Aberdeenshire Councils' Health and Safety Unit and points are awarded to each piece of equipment according to the vibration measurement which is measured in Metres per Second squared (m/s²).

The measurement is allocated a number of points based on each 15 minutes of use – see separate Tagging System Toolbox Talk.

Always monitor your daily Vibration Exposure by ensuring you do not exceed 400 points in a single day unless if you have been diagnosed with Hand Arm vibration Syndrome (HAVS).

If you have been assessed as having Stage 1 HAVS or Stage 2 HAVS by Aberdeenshire Councils' Medical Advisers you should ensure that you do not exceed your recommended daily exposure limit which could be 300 points for Stage 1; 200 points for Stage 2 or any other amount as determined by the Medical Advisor.

Supervisors and Line Managers are responsible for monitoring the daily exposure of employees and safety sampling will be conducted for 2-week periods where specific groups of employees will record their daily exposure to vibration.

As well as occasional safety sampling it will be the responsibility of ALL EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH HAND ARM VIBRATION SYNDROME TO RECORD THEIR DAILY EXPOSURE AT ALL TIMES TO ENSURE THEY DO NOT EXCEED THE RECOMMENDED LIMITS AND TO PROTECT YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK.

The following control measures have been introduced by Aberdeenshire Council to protect you from Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome:

- Health Surveillance introduced
- Training for Health and Safety Advisers
- Central database available on Arcadia
- HAV Assessments conducted by H&S Advisers
- Job Rotation
- Purchasing equipment with lower vibration levels
- Tagging system has been introduced
- A Points system has been developed
- INDG296 (rev 1) Pocket Cards distributed to employees
- Provided information via Health and Safety Newsletters
- Developed Toolbox Talks for employees
- Provided training for Managers and Supervisors
- Developed a Vibration Policy and Guidelines

Report any symptoms of Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome to your Line Manager and seek medical advice – don't ignore early warning signs!