

For guidance on managing construction health risks go to www.hse.gov.uk/construction



## • If tools are worn or need repair, arrange this now with the hire company or your supervisor so that you have proper equipment ready for the next morning.

 If you can, store the tools so that the handles will not get too cold overnight. Hired equipment should always be locked away to keep it safe from theft.

## GENERALLY

- · Cutting down on smoking can help improve poor blood circulation even it is only just before work and during work.
- Don't ignore the early signs of vibration white finger it can become a serious condition which can affect your work, your capacity for work, and your leisure time
- IF YOU ARE THE EMPLOYER, OR YOU ARE SELF EMPLOYED
- · Make sure that suitable gloves and warm clothing are available for anybody who would benefit from them.
- Check that you are providing the best tool for the job in hand talk to the hire company to see what alternatives they have available
- · Keep tools sharp and well maintained. If you get a report from a user that a tool needs attention, then report it to the hire company
- Make sure that all users are aware of the hazards which can arise from work with high vibration tools, and the simple precautions that they can take. Ask the hire company for more copies of this leaflet so that everyone can see it.
- · Organise patterns of work where you can to avoid lengthy and continuous use of high and medium vibration tools.
- Make facilities for rest periods in warm, dry shelter with hot drinks.
- If a user reports signs of vibration white finger, move them away from work with high vibration tools if you can, and take steps to have them checked by their own doctor or an occupational health and safety advisor.
- The Health and Safety Executive recommend a programme of preventive measures and health surveillance when workers' exposure regularly exceeds 2.5m/s2 A(8). This will apply to most tools classed as high or medium risk and to some that classed as low risk if they are regularly used for long periods.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact your hire company for more information about the right tool for the job, and vibration reduced tools.
- Contact the Health and Safety Executive information service for more guidance on the law in the UK – contact www.hse.gov.uk. In the republic of Ireland, call the Health and Safety Authority on (Dublin) 01 614 7000.





to suffer vibration white finger. Poor blood circulation generally, due to lack of exercise, or smoking can also

lead to more vibration being transmitted

Gripping too tightly onto the tool can

by vibration from tools, as the blood supply is already reduced.

Cold hands are more likely to be affected

aut buund dashde to dauraureut (toed

vibration risk can cause a problem if it is

the equipment should be considered "medium vibration risk".

If the numbness or tingling is noticeable only after the best part of the day's use,

fingers. Anything which curves in your there in your there curses interess or tingling in your fingers during or after use should be considered "high vibration risk", until you can find out more about the vibration risk from the tool

vibration levels, then you should monitor the effect of any vibration on your fingers. Anything which causes

Even equipment which is causing

44 (0) 121 333 4109

m Busin



Hire Association Europe 2450 Regents Court The Crescent olibull B37 7YE

seeing your doctor.

Ysb end of the day

While you're working

and flexible.

are secure.

tool for the job.

you are self-employed, consider

the supervisor. Show them this leaflet.

hands and fingers to keep them warm

Take short breaks regularly. Exercise

blunt - this makes for more hard work.

· Check that the tool is not becoming

edges are snarp, and that the handles

conditions: for example that the cutting

· Make sure that the tool is in good

the fool may cause more vibration, you may have to grip it ughter, and the job may rave to grip it ughter, and the job will take longer. Talk to that you plan company about the job that you have the best to do, to check it you have the set

Check that you have the right tool for the job. If you have to force the tool, the following the tool ways when the tool.

important to think about keeping your hands warm. Wearing gloves can help. Ask your supervisor or the hire

that you will be able to keep warm and dry through the day. It is especially

In cold conditions, make sure that you are warm before you start work – and

See if you can use another tool with

company if you need gloves.

IOWEL VIDIZION IEVEIS.

ρειοιε γου start working

REDUCING THE RISK

Keep warm – especially hands.

If you have any persistent tingling or



©Copyright Hire Association Europe April 2011

Any unauthorised reproduction – manually or electronically – is STRICTLY prohibited

MO

o your nands.

day.

əuı

Before Starting Work.

Useful Reference Points • www.hae.org.uk/businessguard

.1001 911

1

# What is "Hand Arm Vibration"?

2150 Safety Guidance

Hand arm vibration

Hand arm vibration syndrome is also sometimes called (white finger disease), "dead hand", "dead finger" or "Raynaud's phenomenon". This condition affects people who regularly use high vibration equipment, such as power tools.

Vibration from the equipment can damage blood vessels in the fingers, reducing the supply of blood. It can also damage nerves, leading to a loss of feeling in the fingers and hands - especially when they become cold. The muscles and bones may also become damaged.

Sufferers find it hard to move their fingers and lose their ability to grip things properly. Work with hand - held tools can become difficult. Picking up small items - such as nails - can be almost impossible. The condition can become very painful.

## **Typical symptoms**

At first, hand - arm vibration syndrome can cause a tingling sensation, or "pins and needles" in the fingers, maybe with some numbness. This will usually happen at the end of a day working with vibrating equipment.

As the condition gets worse, symptoms may be triggered by the cold, without using vibration equipment. The fingers will become white and numb, initially just the tips, but the area can get larger if you continue to work with high - vibration equipment. As blood circulation returns, the fingers may get a red flush and become painful.

In worse case, pains, stiffness and difficulty in handling small items can last for up to an hour, and be triggered by any exposure to mild cold, for example when washing the car, or fishing.



Every effort has been made by HAE/EHA to ensure that the information given in this document and supporting materia PAE/EPA to ensure that the information given a large eading. HAE/EHA cannot accept responsibility for a of any such document/material. Only Acts of Parliar ibility for any loss or liability perc is accurate and not misl om the use of any such document/material. Only Acts of Parliament and Statu have the force of law and only the courts can authoritatively interpret the law. to have arisen

:lism3

:euoudeie

มกอา รมมอติอม กระว Association Europe

**3YT TEB Iludilos** 

The Crescent Birmingham Business Park



### Medium Vibration sarely.

Find out how long you can use the tool use this equipment regularly.

High vibration risk equipment could cause vibration injury even when used for a short time each day – this could wary from as short a period of a few minutes, to a few hours. You will need adequate precautions or control if you use this equipment regulation











following stickers will be displayed on vibrating hand tools for your guidance. See if you can use another tool with

An and the second secon

Some equipment causes more vibration

transmitted straight into your hands through the handles. Even equipment

Vibration from tools such as breakers, angle grinders and chainsaws is

vibration in your hands and arms. which you walk behind, such as a plate

MAA DNAH OT STAAT TAHW VIBRATION?























# Find out how long you can use the tool lower vibration level

## vibration injury. hour working day with low likelihood of sarely.

sately.

Low vibration risk equipment can usually be used regularly throughout an eight-Find out how long you can use the tool

n:6.o.əe

ail@hae.org.uk

44 (0) 121 333 4109

may suggest a different tool or different provide a vibration-reduced version of the tool. This could increase the amount of time that you could use the tool of time that you could versively they without risk of injury. Alternatively, they

day, ask the hire company if they can

throughout the day. If you need to use

High vibration risk or medium vibration Hisk equipment should not bo ed ton bluods tnemqiupe

Daily ours m

Low Vibration Risk Equipment

sure how to do this risk assessment.

assessment is done based on the actual vibration levels the tool will produce under normal working conditions. Consult your supervisor if you are not sure how to do this rick assessment be used longer, but only if a risk usually be used safely for up to 2 hours

Medium vibration risk equipment can

also be more efficient. Check to see if also he more efficient.

If you have no information about to expect in normal use. the Hire Company or manufacturer has fixed a label on the equipment, giving information about the levels of vibration