

Did you know?

What is CBH?

Constructing Better Health (CBH) is a not-for-profit professional organisation set up **by** the construction industry, **for** the construction industry, to improve the health of the construction workforce. CBH works with providers of occupational health (specially trained nurses and doctors who focus on work-related health issues) to find ways of effectively managing health and risks to health in relation to construction work.

What is Occupational Health?

Occupational Health (OH) is the effect of work on an individual's health and the health of an individual on their work. So, by having regular health checks, OH can help prevent future health issues or pick up early signs of a problem. If you already have a health condition, OH could help you continue working and prevent the condition from getting worse.

What are work-related health checks (or health surveillance)?

There are certain regulations in Health and Safety law that require your employer to provide you with health checks or 'health surveillance'. You may be offered health surveillance if, for example, your job involves working for periods of time, with:

- *Vibrating tools*
- *Noise*
- *Skin irritants, such as cement*
- *Certain types of dust*
- *Lifting*

These 'hazards' have the potential to cause harm and could affect your health. For example, working with cement could cause dermatitis.

Even if your job does not involve the types of work listed above, you can contact your occupational health advisers or your employer about situations at work that you think might put you at risk.

If your employer can't get rid of the hazards that you are exposed to, then they have a duty to look after your health by ensuring you have regular health checks' to make sure you are not being made ill by your work.

Certain checks could be carried out by a manager or supervisor who has been specially trained. Most health checks, however, will be undertaken by an occupational health nurse or doctor. They should explain to you what is involved and why you should undertake the test.

Sometimes your employer may offer you health checks that are not related to your work; for example, a urine test for diabetes or a blood test to check cholesterol. You do not have to have these tests but it may be advisable. If you do have this type of check, any results are kept confidential and your manager is not entitled to know any results, but it may help to diagnose any problems early to reduce your long term risk of ill health.

Do I have to have these health checks?

Where your manager has identified that the work you are doing could make you ill, and where there is a known health check to detect that, they have a duty to provide the appropriate health check. It is your right to refuse to have these health checks, but if you refuse them and they are required by law, your employer may stop you doing the part of your work where you are exposed to the hazard. This is because if you don't have the health check your employer won't know if the hazard has affected your health.

What happens during a health check?

Firstly the nurse or doctor should introduce themselves and explain about the health checks. This should be done somewhere private. The nurse or doctor will ask you to sign a consent form to prove that you have agreed and understood what the health check involves.

They will go through a questionnaire first, asking you a series of questions so they understand what your job involves, what hazards you are exposed to, and any existing health problems, as well as any symptoms you may be experiencing.

Depending on which health checks you are having, and whether they are voluntary or because the law requires it, the health professional will carry out a series of tests. They should explain each part of the test and ensure you understand what you are required to do.

The nurse or doctor should inform you of the results and what they mean.

What if they find something wrong?

If something is wrong, the doctor or nurse will then explain to you what the results mean and will suggest that you see a doctor, either your own GP or a doctor that specialises in occupational health. Depending on the outcome and the length of time the condition is likely to last, they may recommend that your employer makes 'reasonable adjustments' to your job; this means finding different ways of controlling your exposure to what ever has affected your health. They will also look at the overall workplace, to make sure other people are not at risk. Generally, it is unlikely you would lose your job as a result.

What am I asked to give consent to?

Consent is an important subject and you need to understand what it means. If, after it has been explained by the nurse or doctor, you are still unsure about what it means, please ask them to explain again, or phone **CBH on 0845 873 7726 for advice.**

Why is CBH asking for my consent?

The main reason for CBH holding your information centrally is so that your health check results don't get lost as you move around to other jobs and so you can prove you have been cleared to do certain types of work.

CBH also wants to help prevent people working in construction from being made ill by the work they do so they will collect all the results up and use them anonymously to produce reports for research purposes. This would not include any individual's names.

What will my Manager get told?

Any information you give the occupational health nurse or doctor about your health is confidential, but they have a duty to tell your employer if working with certain hazards is making you ill. They will not tell your manager anything medical, just about your fitness for certain tasks.

What will my Site Manager know?

We are working towards each person having a smart card which will let site managers look to see if you have had the necessary work-related health checks, or to be able to check via the CBH website. Again they will NOT be able to see any private medical information, just what tests you have had (provided that the nature of the test does not reveal the nature of the medical condition), when they are due to repeated and whether there is anything that would stop you being made ill by your work. For example, if you use vibrating tools, it may be that the time you spend using them needs to be restricted.

What will they see on the CBH website?

When a site manager accesses the CBH website or uses a smartcard to find out whether you have had your health check, they will see something like this:

PICTURE

Can I withdraw consent?

Yes, at any time. You can inform CBH that you no longer wish us to hold your data.

If you have any questions, please speak to your occupational health nurse/doctor or manager, or **telephone CBH on 0845 873 7726 and speak to one of us.**

Our website address is www.cbhscheme.com