

Hand-Arm Vibration Exposure

Prolonged exposure to vibrating tools and equipment can cause, Hand-arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS). This is a condition related to the use of hand-held power tools e.g. grinders, hammer drills or from hand-guided machinery e.g. chainsaws, plate compactors.

Essentials



Impact



Identify the Risk



Manage the Risk



Competence

- HAVS is a serious condition which could lead to permanent medical damage affecting both your ability to work and social activities.
- It is caused by prolonged use of tools and plant that vibrate e.g. Rock Drills, Disc Cutters.
- Do not use these tools for longer than required.
- Use tools with vibration levels as low as possible.
- Make sure you have been trained in their use and know the Safe Exposure levels.

Hand-Arm Vibration Exposure

What can we do to prevent HAVS?

Impact

- Be aware of the symptoms - what it looks and feels like
- Are you at particular risk due to other conditions, such as diabetes, poor circulation?
- Limit your exposure

Identify Risk

- Know which tools or work processes expose you to vibration
- Know the time limits set for their use
- Report potential problems with pneumatic tools
- Identify tools with least impact

Manage the Risk

- Plan work to reduce exposure time
- Use non-vibrating alternative methods if possible
- Mechanise or automate work task
- Take regular breaks
- Rotate vibrating work with colleagues
- Use jigs or clamps to support work

Competence

- Ensure you are trained to use tools
- Select right tool for job
- Keep tools in good working order
- Use safe working practices

