



24.13 Safety Critical Medical Assessments: A Guide for Employees

Introduction

Safety Critical Work (SCW) is defined as “Any work where the ill health of an individual may compromise their ability to undertake a task defined as safety-critical, thereby posing a significant risk to the health and safety of others.”

The term may cover many roles undertaken on a construction site or otherwise, including plant or equipment operators, employees working at height and/or in confined spaces and anyone in contact with hazardous chemicals, materials, or fuels or those working next to moving vehicles or undertaking intrinsically dangerous work.



Why do I need to be assessed?

Someone has identified that the work that you do is classified as “Safety Critical”. This decision may be made by your employer, their customer, the construction site owner or the primary contractor.

How might my health be affected?

- Skin:** Dermatitis and other work-related skin issues.
- Breathing:** Respiratory disorders caused by exposure to respirable crystalline silica (RCS) and other airborne risks.
- Hearing:** Hearing damage from noisy environments.
- HAVS:** Damage to circulation and nerves from exposure to vibration.
- And:** Other medical disorders related to construction work.

How does my health affect others?

Problems like high blood pressure or poor vision could lead to loss of consciousness, loss of vehicular control or other dangerous occurrences that could injure you or the people around you.

How can I help reduce the risks?

It is your employer’s responsibility to protect you against certain work-related health problems like White Finger, hearing loss and silicosis.

An employee has an obligation to follow safety instructions from the employer and to ensure their own and other people’s safety.



They must also comply with health surveillance where it is required.

The safety Critical Medical Assessment is designed to review various aspects of an individual's health and identify problems at an early stage.

What happens if a health problem is found?

You might be asked to visit your GP, an optician, or some other healthcare professional. In most cases the problem can be treated and should have minimal effect on your future employability.

Occasionally, a problem may mean that you must be excluded from certain types of work. Decisions about exclusion are not taken lightly but are sometimes required to ensure that the safety & health of yourself and of those around you are not put at risk.

What you will need for the assessment

- Spectacles, if you need them for driving or reading.
- A full and up-to-date list of any current medication.
- Any hospital or doctor's letters or info relating to serious medical conditions or work-related health issues.
- If you suffer with raised BP or asthma, some recent self-measurements will help us to decide about your fitness on the day.

Thinking about your future health

MOHS's Safety Critical Medical Assessment is a comprehensive medical review that looks at many aspects of your health.

Construction work is dangerous and working away from home can affect both your physical and mental health. At the end of it, we will have assessed all the common areas of your health that are likely to be affected by working in construction. We would have also assessed those areas that might affect your safety or the safety of those around you.

One or more medical issues may be brought to your attention. Although they may not be serious enough to affect your certification, they should be acted upon. If are asked to discuss an issue with your GP, even if you have been passed fit, it is a good idea to follow this advice rather than storing up health problems for the future. It is easier to treat minor issues as they occur than waiting for them to become major problems which may affect your ability to do this type of work in the future.

Further information

Further information about health & the construction industry can be found here:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/>

HSE advice regarding health risks for the construction industry can be found here. These factors dictate the types of health surveillance that are required: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/healthrisks/index.htm>

A copy of this & other documentation can be found from <https://mohs.co.uk/resources> or using the QR code at the top of this page.