

## A Guide On: Injury From Vibration



### Injury Caused by Vibrating Machinery

It is not uncommon to work with vibrating machinery but unfortunately it can have its consequences. Exposure to regular and frequent vibration at work can have long term and permanent effects on a worker's health including effects to the arms and hands (Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome), Carpel Tunnel Syndrome and also back and muscle pain.

### Symptoms

Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) can cause major health problems such as issues with nerves, blood vessels and joints which can be both painful as well as disabling. Whole body vibration (WBV) can also occur when vibrations are transported through the feet or a seat of a vehicle.

Symptoms to look out for include:

- Reduced feeling in your fingers and hands – either totally or numbness
- Tingling or cold sensations in your fingers
- An inability to hold or pick up items with your hands as easily which may get worse over time
- A reduced ability to do any fine work
- Your fingers tips going from white to red and then being painful upon recovery when exposed to cold and wet conditions
- Discoloration of the skin on your fingers which may be caused by damage to blood vessels

The symptoms do not just cause physical pain for an individual but can also result in psychological distress and an inability to sleep properly. Unfortunately, many of these symptoms are permanent and therefore the long term effects on an individual and their families can be devastating.

### Main Causes

Examples of industries mostly affected:

- Construction
- Water services
- Gas services
- Grounds maintenance
- Heavy engineering
- Forestry
- Building & Repair – roads, railways, ships, motor vehicles, concrete products
- Metal factories

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The main causes of injuries from vibration at work are through the use of:

- Hand-held power tools such as hammer drills, chainsaws and concrete breakers to name a few
- Work pieces that vibrate whilst being processed by powered machinery such as pedestal grinders
- Hammer action tools for more than 15 minutes a day.
- Some rotary and other action tools for more than an hour a day.
- Shocks or jolts from driving mobile vehicles such as tractors, fork lift trucks, diggers etc.
- Driving vehicles over rough and uneven surfaces as a regular part of a job

### Employees Responsibilities

Employees should ensure that any health and safety controls put in place by their employers are followed and to be aware of the impact their actions have on others.

Those working with vibrating machinery and tools should take note of any symptoms that may be developing and seek medical advice at the earliest possible opportunity if they suspect their health may be affected.

Employees should never feel unable to approach their employer about increasing protection of the health and safety of the workforce.

If you are concerned for your own welfare or the safety of others, you can always talk to the health and safety representative at your workplace or trade union for advice.

### Employers Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of an employer to protect its workers against vibration injuries And are bound legally by the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005.

By law, employers must:

- Carry out assessments to determine the risks of vibration injury
- Eliminate or reduce risks of exposure to excess vibration
- Limit vibration exposure
- Have an action plan in place for high risk assessments
- Ensure control measures to reduce vibration risks are implemented and applied
- Provide information & training to all employees

This may include specific actions needed such as:

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- Ensuring employees are not exposed above vibration limits as set out in the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005
- Considering other processes or machinery which could reduce vibration exposure risks. These should be included in the action plan resulting from any risk assessments
- Protecting employees from cold and wet weather conditions
- Ensuring employees under constant exposure have regular rest periods
- Replacing any dangerous vehicles with non-dangerous ones
- Considering the choice of seats and tyres in vibrating vehicles
- Looking at the workflow of a place to limit the need to transport materials
- Being aware of the effects of vibrations and therefore take action if any workers are complaining of any of the symptoms of vibration injury.

### Can You Make a Claim?

If you suffer from a condition that was caused or made worse by working with vibrating machinery at work, you may be eligible for compensation. You need to make a claim within 3 years of knowing the condition could be work related. Employers have a legal duty to reasonably protect you from such injuries happening within the guidelines they are given. If you feel your employer failed to meet this duty, you may be able to make a successful claim.

The first thing to do is make contact with us and we will guide you through with a no obligation discussion about your case.

### How Can We Help You?

At Injury Lawyers UK we can give you free, impartial advice on whether you have a potentially successful claim or not. We are a team of dedicated and experienced Personal injury lawyers who believe in securing the maximum amount of compensation to people to get them the justice they deserve.

We guide you through the process using clear jargon-free language so you always clearly know exactly what is happening. We have years of experience in this field so you will always have the best advisers at hand to answer any questions you have along the way.

We operate a no win, no fee policy so you do not have to worry about paying a penny until compensation is secured for you. This takes the hassle away at what is already a stressful time.

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### Get In Touch With Injury Lawyers UK

Get in touch with Injury Lawyers UK today to discuss whether you could be eligible to make a claim for compensation for injuries sustained in a workplace accident. Call us on [0800 285 1411](tel:08002851411), send an email to [claims@injury-lawyersuk.com](mailto:claims@injury-lawyersuk.com) or submit an online enquiry form on our web site: [injury-lawyersuk.com](http://injury-lawyersuk.com)

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