Occupational and Environmental Medicine

Adopted as the Journal of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians of London

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NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS: Occupational and Environmental Medicine is intended for the publication of original contributions relevant to occupational and environmental medicine, including toxicological studies of chemicals of industrial, agricultural, and environmental importance, and epidemiological studies. As well as full papers, short papers dealing with brief or preliminary observations relevant to occupational and environmental medicine will also be considered. Case reports should cover substantial new ground to merit publication. Other articles, including review or position papers, will be considered but should not be submitted without first approaching the Editor to discuss their suitability for the Journal. Letters to the Editor are always welcome.

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS: Three copies of all submissions should be sent to: The Editor, Occupational and Environmental Medicine, BMJ Publishing Group, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR, UK. All authors should sign the covering letter as evidence of consent to publication. Papers reporting results of studies on human subjects must be accompanied by a statement that the subjects gave written, informed consent and by evidence of approval from the appropriate ethics committee. These papers should conform to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki (BMJ 1964;i:177).

If requested, authors shall produce the data on which the manuscript is based, for examination by the Editor.

Authors are asked to submit with their manuscript the names and addresses of three people who they consider would be suitable independent reviewers. They will not necessarily be approached to review the paper.

Papers are considered on the understanding that they are submitted solely to this Journal and do not duplicate material already published elsewhere. In cases of doubt, where part of the material has been published elsewhere, the published material should be included with the submitted manuscript to allow the Editor to assess the degree of duplication. The Editor cannot enter into correspondence about papers rejected as being unsuitable for publication, and the Editor's decision in these matters is final.

Papers should include a structured abstract of not more than 300 words, under headings of Objectives, Methods, Results, and Conclusions. Please include up to three keywords or key terms to assist with indexing.

Papers should follow the requirements of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (BMJ 1991;302:338-41). Papers and references must be typewritten in double spacing on one side of the paper only, with wide margins. SI units should be used.

Short reports (including case reports) should not be more than 1500 words including a brief abstract. They should comprise sections of Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion with not more than one table or figure and up to 10 references. The format of case reports should be Introduction, Case report, and Discussion.

Illustrations: Photographs and photomicrographs on glossy paper should be submitted unmounted. Charts and graphs should be carefully drawn in black ink on firm white paper. Legends to figures should be typed on a separate sheet of paper.

References: References will not be checked by the editorial office; responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of references lies with the authors. Number references consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text. Identify references in texts, tables, and legends by Arabic numerals. References cited only in tables or in legends to figures should be numbered in accordance with a sequence established by the first identification in the text of a particular table or illustration. Include only references essential to the argument being developed in the paper or to the discussion of results, or to describe methods which are being used when the original description is too long for inclusion. Information from manuscripts not yet in press or personal communications should be cited in the text, not as formal references.

Use the Vancouver style, as in this issue for instance, for a standard journal article: authors (list all authors when seven or fewer, when eight or more, list only six and add et al), title, abbreviated title of journal as given in Index Medicus (if not in Index Medicus give in full), year of publication, volume number, and first and last page numbers.

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Occupational exposure to magnetic fields in relation to mortality from brain cancer among electricity generation and transmission workers


Occupational and Environmental Medicine and the electronic age

OEM has an Email address which is 100632.3615@compuserve.com. We welcome contact by Email, including letters to the editor. Some of our reviewers already send us their reports by Email, helping to speed up the peer review process.

We are moving towards electronic publishing and for some months now we have been asking authors to send us their revised papers on disk as well as a hard copy. I am delighted to report that nearly all our authors are managing to comply with this request. Oddly enough, the few authors who have not sent us a disk version of their revised papers have been almost exclusively from the United Kingdom. I would be interested in suggestions for why this might be. Perhaps United Kingdom based authors read our correspondence and instructions less assiduously? Watch for revised Instructions to Authors.

The Editor
constriction.

In conclusion, the present study showed a strong dose dependent relation between concentrations of inhaled HF and plasma fluoride. Among the subjective symptoms that were registered during the 24 hours after one hour of exposure at low doses of HF, symptoms of the upper airways and eyes dominated and appeared even at concentrations similar to those occurring in the work atmosphere of primary aluminium production. According to our findings, the concentrations of HF should be kept well below 2.5 mg/m³ to avoid symptoms of the upper airways and eyes.

We are indebted to Mari-Anne Boe for performing the lung function tests and recording the symptoms and associate professor Sven Ove Samuelsen for statistical advice. The study was supported by the Working Environment Fund of the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry, the Nordic Aluminium Industry's Secretariat for Health, Environment, and Safety (AMS), the Research Council of Norway, the Norwegian Asthma and Allergy Association, the Glaxo Research Fund, Norway, the Astra Research Fund, Norway, the Swedish Medical Research Council Project Numbers 11257-01A and 09439-05X, and the Swedish Patent Revenue Research Fund.


Correspondence and editorials

Occupational and Environmental Medicine welcomes correspondence relating to any of the material appearing in the journal. Results from preliminary or small scale studies may also be published in the correspondence column if this seems appropriate. Letters should be not more than 500 words in length and contain a minimum of references. Tables and figures should be kept to an absolute minimum. Letters are accepted on the understanding that they may be subject to editorial revision and shortening.

The journal also publishes editorials which are normally specially commissioned. The Editor welcomes suggestions regarding suitable topics; those wishing to submit an editorial, however, should do so only after discussion with the Editor.
Vancouver style

All manuscripts submitted to Occup Environ Med should conform to the uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals (known as the Vancouver style.)

Occup Environ Med, together with many other international biomedical journals, has agreed to accept articles prepared in accordance with the Vancouver style. The style (described in full in the BMJ, 24 February 1979, p 532) is intended to standardise requirements for authors.

References should be numbered consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text by Arabic numerals above the line on each occasion the reference is cited (Manson1 confirmed other reports2-6 . . . .). In future references to papers submitted to Occup Environ Med should include: the names of all authors if there are seven or less or, if there are more, the first six followed by et al; the title of journal articles or book chapters; the titles of journals abbreviated according to the style of Index Medicus; and the first and final page numbers of the article or chapter. Titles not in Index Medicus should be given in full.

Examples of common forms of references are:

1 International Steering Committee of Medical Editors, Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals. BMJ 1979;1:532-5.

Rejected manuscripts

From February 1994, authors whose submitted articles are rejected will be advised of the decision and one copy of the article, together with any reviewers’ comments, will be returned to them. The Journal will destroy remaining copies of the article but correspondence and reviewers’ comments will be kept.

Experimental research on mineral fibre toxicology goes back a long way in the United Kingdom. Pioneering studies of animal exposure to asbestos were carried out by Beattie in Sheffield in 1912, by Stewart in Leeds, and by Kettle at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London in the 1930s, and tissue culture studies with asbestos were carried out by Belt, Friedmann, and King at Hammersmith in London in the late 1930s and early 1940s. A flourishing programme of research studying a range of mineral fibres was conducted by Wagner and Tumbril in the 1960s and 1970s under the Medical Research Council (MRC) until their unit was disbanded.

This report was commissioned by the MRC Committee on Toxic Hazards in the Environment and Workplace, to advise its Physiological Medicine and Infections Board on priority areas for research in the field of mineral fibres. It is the fruit of two days of workshops at the Institute for Environment and Health. (The MRC is to be congratulated. How did it get agreement for an Institute for Environment and Health (a Phoenix born out of Lawther's and Conners' units)!, while there is still opposition to the establishment of a much needed National Institute for Health?) The workshop report, constituting a quarter of the booklet, considers the state of the problem and the research needs, and makes recommendations for the United Kingdom research programme.

The main portion is an appendix made up of a series of reviews of research on mineral fibres and the identification of gaps in knowledge. The discussions and conclusions are wise and predictable. This booklet was preceded by a number of reviews including the following:


The unequivocal message from these reports was that the problem required a broad programme of research overlapping other interests, and would involve cooperation on an international scale. Although printed some time ago their advice has not been ignored by events. One wonders what different advice the MRC expected. The studies of Mearl Stanton corresponded with a flowering of research on fibre toxicology: his death coincided with changes in the political, scientific, and economic climates, which led to the closure of units and have militated against national programmes of research and study, let alone international ones. The study of asbestos represents a piece of ignorance on important aspects of fibre toxicity is our legacy.

MORRIS GREENBERG


The author's aim in this publication, primarily addressed to people engaged in litigation, has been to provide a global and comprehensive account of the development of the asbestos industry and of the knowledge on asbestos diseases. It is based on a review of material that has been published or obtained by legal discovery. Recent legal discovery, having thrown open such volumes of papers not available for study, has justified a new edition. Although physically a slender volume, it includes a further 200 pages in an attempt to keep abreast of the situation, and continues its attractive format. Members of the flourishing and lucrative United States asbestos litigation industry will get a good read for their money, although they will be left in no doubt that it is not an apologia for the industry. People wishing to work in this field with the literature will find that it has useful bibliographies.

Those who misinterpret their youth seeing too many American B films and reading too much pulp literature of the "politician, scandal, horror, shock" variety, and subsequently learn that things aren't necessarily so, may be sceptical about an American expose (good enough for the New Yorker). However, take for example the account of Richard Schilling, an earlier illustrious editor of the original Occupational and Environmental Medicine and the request for him not to publish Doll's paper on lung cancer in asbestos workers, and the scheming to have Doll or the Medical Research Council withdraw the paper. The documentation is now available, as it is for several other events. Suppressed research results, and the machinations of gamekeepers turned poachers, are documented and exposed to daylight. Those people unfamiliar with the field may have been led to think that the asbestos problem is a matter of purely historical interest. Unfortunately it is not. The developed world has vastly reduced its asbestos consumption (although it still has its legacy from past usage), but the developing world has replaced it as a major user.

The reader, whether new to the field or an old hand, will get a lot of information from this edition. However, unless gifted with a high degree of sensitivity, the reader will not get a full sense of the stupidity and wickedness that comes over when handling actual documents concerned in this saga. The historical side is selective of the individual people whose contributions to our knowledge and ignorance of matters asbestos are discussed and the index is somewhat sparse. (Where are the Beatons, Grieve, Smithere, Corbett McDonald?) Historical accuracy requires more detailed evaluation of the roles of the players in the drama than would seem to be possible within the constraints of this volume.

MORRIS GREENBERG

1997 Continuing education: sponsored by NIOSH

7-10 January. Cincinnati, OH. Basic instructor course in occupational safety and health standards for the construction industry (OSHA 500).


8-11 April. St Paul, MN. Collateral duty course for other federal agencies (OSHA 600). 21-24 July. Cincinnati, OH.

10-13 June. St Paul, MN. Machinery and machine guarding standards (OSHA 204A). 9-12 September. Cincinnati, OH.


Further information from: Midwest Center for Occupational Health and Safety, Program in Continuing Education, University of Minnesota, 640 Jackson Street, St Paul, MN 55101, (612) 221-3992. Web Site URL: http://www.healthpartners.com/mcoh/mcohls.html

Molecular advances in cancer epidemiology and prevention. 20-22 February 1997. Sheraton Palace Hotel, San Francisco, California

This programme provides an overview of developments in biomolecular research that have defined the fundamental mechanisms of carcinogenesis in human populations, and which point the way to innovative approaches to cancer epidemiology and prevention. The programme will focus on applications of molecular diagnostics for identifying human exposures to carcinogenic hazards, new techniques for detecting genetically susceptible people, and screening high risk cancer populations. The programme is designed for physicians and researchers in the disciplines of epidemiology, genetics, pathology, molecular biology, and public health.

The format features lectures and discussions with faculty. Major topics to be covered include:

- Disease pathways and gene products
- Mutational spectra: insights into causation and prognosis
- Breast cancer screening: controversy and evidence
- Highly penetrant cancer susceptibility genes
- Genetic modifiers and gene-environment interaction
Notices

Co-chairs: by John E Conte, Jr, MD, Michelle AM Manos, PhD, and John K Wiencke, PhD, this programme is presented by the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics of the University of California School of Medicine at San Francisco. The programme is supported by UCSF's Office of Continuing Medical Education. UCSF is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education. This programme will meet the criteria for Category I credit.

Further information from: The Office of Continuing Medical Education, Room MCB-630, University of California, San Francisco, California 94143-0742. Phone: (415) 476-4251; Fax: (415) 476-0318; e-mail: inquire@ocme.ucsf.edu; http://cmec.ucsf.edu

NIVA 1997 calendar: advanced courses and symposia in occupational health and safety

Assessment of functional capacity and physical work load—a participatory approach. 3–7 March 1997, Finnish Sports Institute, Vierumäki, Finland.


Occupational dermatoses. 8–13 April 1997, Hotel Riekonlinna, Saariselkä (Lapland), Finland.


Assessment of psychological factors at work. 5–9 May 1997, Hotel Voksenåsen, Oslo, Norway.

Health effects of physical and mental work loads. 12–16 May 1997, Hotel Lofotleidir, Reykjavik, Iceland.

Current trends in research on work-related musculoskeletal disorders and their prevention. 2–6 June 1997, Vær Gård, Saltsjöbaden (Stockholm), Sweden.

Gender, work, and psychosocial health. 9–13 June 1997, Hotel Eckerö, Eckerö, Åland, Finland.

Epidemiological study design. 11–22 August 1997, Hanassari Cultural Centre, Espoo (Helsinki), Finland.

Introduction to occupational epidemiology. 18–29 August 1997, Hotel Gentofte, Copenhagen, Denmark.


Risk assessment and risk management of the work environment. 13–17 October 1997, Schæffergaarden, Copenhagen, Denmark.

The basics of occupational health. 10–14 November 1997, Institute of Experimental and Clinical Medicine, Tallinn, Estonia.


Further information from: NIVA Topeliuksenkatu 41 a A, FIN-00250 Helsinki, Finland. Tel +358 0 47471, Fax +358 0 4747 497.


The conference is being held under the auspices of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH), the Scientific Council of Cardiology in Occupational Health. The main topics addressed will be:

- Pre-employment screening for cardiovascular disease
- Risk factors of cardiovascular disease and fitness for work
- Surveillance and monitoring workers and the work environment
- Effects of the work environment on cardiovascular risk including: noise, shift work, chemical and other exposures, psychosocial stressors, and specific occupations
- Mechanisms linking the work environment and cardiovascular disease
- Return to work of cardiac patients; comprehensive rehabilitation programmes
- The contribution of medical, psychological, occupational and organisational factors to work capacity and the ability to return to work
- Health promotion at the workplace
- Modification of the work environment to reduce risk of cardiovascular disease.

For further information please contact: Dr S Melamed, Occupational Health and Rehabilitation Institute, Lootenstein Hospital, PO Box 3, Raanana, 45100, Israel. Tel 972-9-7710994; fax 972-9-7712212.


The need for such a conference became clear at the last international congress of FIM—the Fédération Internationale des Musiciens—when grave concern was expressed at the number of musicians, especially those in orchestras, who had performance related medical problems. Considerable advances have been made over recent years, especially in the United Kingdom, and through the work of the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM), and the Association of Medical Advisers to British Orchestras (AMABO).

The conference is being planned for FIM by BAPAM and the British Musicians Union, with the assistance of the Association of British Orchestras. Conference topics will include:

- Stress and its links with health
- Overuse and misuse in musicians
- Dysautonias
- Embouchure problems and treatments
- Anxiety, depression and psychosomatic illness
- Posture, technique, and illness
- Stage fright and its causes and treatments
- Burn-out
- Problems of women performers
- The different problems of classical, jazz, and rock musicians.

For further information contact: Conference Secretariat: British Association for Performing Arts Medicine, 18 Ogle Street, London W1P 7LG, England. Tel + 44 (0)171-636-6860; Fax + 44 (0)171-636-6880; E-mail: bapamt@diad.pipex.com

Occupational dermatoses (and skiing) in Lapland, Finland: 5th international course on occupational dermatoses. 9–13 April 1997. Hotel Riekonlinna, Saariselkä (Lapland), Finland

Four international courses on occupational dermatoses have so far been arranged by NIVA, in 1982, 1986, 1991 and 1994. Each course was attended by about 80–100 participants. Occupational dermatoses causes a significant percentage of industrial disabilities and a great number of lost work days. It has proved difficult even for an experienced dermatologist to determine the agent causing an occupational skin disease.

The aim of this course is to provide the participants with detailed up-to-date knowledge on occupational dermatoses. The course will comprise the latest knowledge on the progress of occupational dermatology of practical importance. The language of the course is English, and the course leader is Professor Lasse Kanerva.

Each lecture is followed by in depth discussions. Group teaching will take place daily tutored by a faculty member. The groups will discuss problems brought in by the participants, and will review and solve questions that have come up during the lectures. Active participation of the participants is highly encouraged. Reports related to occupational dermatology can also be presented as posters.

The course is aimed at occupational dermatologists, dermatologists, and clinicians in industrial medicine with a good basic knowledge of occupational dermatology.

Main topics
- Allergic contact dermatitis
- Irritant contact dermatitis
- Immunology of contact dermatitis
- Epidemiology of occupational dermatoses
- Contact urticaria
- Immediate allergy skin testing
- Patch testing problems
- New allergens.

Saariselkä, 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, is the most popular ski resort in Finland. Skiing is possible daily during an extended lunch break.

For further information contact: Pirjo Turttainen, NIVA, Topeliuksenkatu 41A, FIN-00250 Helsinki, Finland. Tel + 358 9 4747 349; fax + 358 9 4747 497; E-mail: pirjo.turttainen@occuphealth.fi


The forum will consist of one day teaching courses, invited presentations, posters and presentations selected from submissions and a scientific session.

For more information contact: BMA, Conference Unit, PO Box 295, London, WC1H 9TE. Tel: +44 (0) 171 383 6478 Fax: +44 (0) 171 383 6869.


Specific aims are:
- To exchange information and review national and international experiences in the implementation of health and safety policies and cost and benefits analyses
- To identify and discuss the key factors influencing costs and benefits of occupational safety and health policy at the individual, the company, the national, and the European level
- To explore strategies for the future in policy, science and practice to improve
the efficiency and effectiveness of occupational safety and health initiatives.

Simultaneous interpretation will probably be provided in English, French and German.

The conference is hosted by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment of the Netherlands in cooperation with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin, on the occasion of the Dutch presidency of the European Union in the first half of 1997. The conference is organized by the TNO Centre for Occupational Safety and Health.

For further information contact: C/o Holland Organizing Centre, Parkstraat 29, NL 2514 JF The Hague, The Netherlands. Telephone + 31 70 365 7850; Telefax + 31 70 364 5748. E-mail:Conference97@hoc.nl.

8th International meeting on low frequency noise and vibration. 3-5 June 1997. Hotel 11, Maskingatan Gothenburg

The meeting is sponsored by: The Journal of Low Frequency Noise and Vibration

The topics of the conference will be those of the sponsoring journal, among which are:

- Sources of infrasound, low frequency noise and vibration, including hand arm and whole body vibration
- Detection, measurement, and analysis
- Control, especially active control
- Propagation
- Perception and subjective effects

For further information contact: Multiscience Publishing Co Ltd, 107 High street, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4RX, United Kingdom. Telephone 01277 224632; Fax 01277 223453.

Electricity—safety and progress. 18-20 June 1997. Dublin Castle Conference Centre

This will be the motto of the 12th international colloquium of the "international section of the international social security association for the prevention of occupational accidents and illness due to electricity". Main topics:

- Current electrotechnical topics:
- Electrophysiology
- Methods of working on cables and other electrical systems
- Protection and aids for methods of working, personal protective equipment, installation of electrical equipment in special areas, protection against electric shocks
- European activities:
- EU regulations and national law
- Regulations proposed by ISSA
- European standards on the operation of electrical equipment, high-voltage systems, requirements imposed on equipment, protection against accidental contact
- Test and certification procedures
- Safety regulations for test equipment
- Selected topics from other areas:
- New media for basic and advanced training
- Methods of working for gas and water utilities
- Working on overhead cables
- Occupational safety rules for non-ionizing radiation

Further information from: Secretariat of the ISSA Section "Electricity", c/o Berufsgenossenschaft der Feinmechanik und Elektrotechnik, Gustav-Heinemann-Ufer 130, D-50968 Köln. Tel (0)221/37 78-448 or -456; Fax (0)221/37 78-457 or -134.

International Ergonomics Association

13th Triennial Congress. 29 June to 4 July 1997. Tampere, Finland.

The theme of the Congress is: from experience to innovation, which emphasises the multifaceted nature of the knowledge needed in ergonomics. The programme consists of:

- 17 Keynote addresses
- 18 Separate symposia
- Numerous workshops, poster sessions and free communications
- Special programme for students.

For further information contact: Mr Markku Leppänen, Tampere University of Technology, PO Box 589, FIN-33101 Tampere. Tel +358-31-316 2581; fax +358-31-316 2671; email: mleppane@cc.tut.fi

VI International symposium of the international section of the ISSA for the prevention of occupational risks in the iron and metal industry: 20-22 October, 1997, Barcelona.

The main themes of the symposium are:

- Management, organisation, and control in the field of safety and health at the workplace (programmes, risk analysis, assessment, normalisation, quality ...)
- Specific problems of occupational safety and health in small and medium sized enterprises as well as possibilities for counselling and support
- Current problems of occupational hygiene (dust, mineral fibres, surface treatments ...)

Furthermore, the symposium will discuss other current problems and solutions, such as the transposition of European Directives or outsourcing.

The symposium is aimed at safety engineers, occupational physicians and hygienists, human resources managers, management representatives, experts in various fields from the industry, representatives of the social partners, the social insurances, and the authorities.

Further information from: Secretariat of the ISSA Section “Metal”, c/o Kongressbüro, Allgemeine Unfallversicherungsanstalt, Adalbert-Stifter-Strasse 65, A-1200 Vienna, Austria. Tel +43-1-33111-537; Fax +43-1-33111-469.

Global theme issue on aging: invitation to submit papers.

Many international journals, including Occupational and Environmental Medicine, have agreed to participate in a global theme issue on aging, in October 1997. There are many aspects of aging that are relevant to occupational and environmental medicine. We are commissioning several articles and also invite submission of articles on this theme. Particular aspects of aging relevant to the journal that we have identified include: biomonitoring, psychosocial stressors, accidents, musculoskeletal problems, prejudices based on age, occupational health services and an aging workforce, pre-employment screening, and placement of older workers. If you have work in these or other relevant areas, please send it to the editorial office as soon as possible. All submitted articles will, of course, be subject to the usual peer review process.