

On the Job Front

Help Your Workers Avoid Cancer Risks

Though your workers might associate cancer worries with the food they eat or the air they breathe, the truth is that there *are* cancer risks in the workplace, including UV exposure for outdoor worker and carcinogenic chemical exposures.

Give your worker this quick overview of these common workplace cancer risks, customizing the information to the risks they faced.

No Skin Off Your Back?

If you have outdoor workers, advise them to report to their supervisor immediately if they notice the following on their skin:

- any change, especially in the size or color of a mole or other darkly pigmented growth or spot, or a new growth
- scaliness, oozing, bleeding, itchiness, tenderness, or pain
- dark coloring that spreads past the edge of a mole or mark

They should also see a dermatologist because these symptoms may indicate skin cancer. Review your workplace's UV exposure precautions and protection procedures with your outdoor workers.

Chemical Carcinogens

Millions of U.S. workers are exposed to chemical materials that could be carcinogenic. If any of your workers are in this group, train them to take these steps to protect themselves from carcinogen exposure:

- Enter regulated areas only if you're assigned and authorized.
- Wear assigned, undamaged personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Inspect PPE before use to make sure it's undamaged and fits properly.
- For standard operations in a regulated area, wear:
 - § a coverall, a smock, a long-sleeved shirt and pants, or other full-body protection
 - § gloves
 - § shoe covers
 - § a half-face, filter-type respirator
- For tasks with risk of direct carcinogen contact, wear:
 - § impervious clothing, gloves and boots, *and*
 - § a continuous-air supplied hood
- Don't keep or use food, beverages, cosmetics, smoking products, or chewing gum in regulated area.
- Remove PPE properly when you leave a regulated area.
- Leave used PPE in the area assigned for decontamination and/or disposal.
- Wash your hands, forearms, face, and neck before leaving the area.
- Shower at the end of the shift or immediately after direct exposure.
- Put on street clothes in the clean change room.
Do not take contaminated clothing, PPE, or materials home.
- Follow decontamination procedures for materials and equipment.
Follow decontamination procedures for materials and equipment.

Why It Matters

Melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer, accounts for about 60,000 cases of skin cancer annually and about 8,000 deaths. But even for melanoma, if it is diagnosed early, the five-year survival rate is 99 percent.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health estimates that about 20,000 cancer deaths and 40,000 new cases of work-related cancer occur each year in the United States.¹