

EH&S Fast Facts

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH & THE UNIVERSITY WORKPLACE



Reproductive hazards are substances that affect the ability to have healthy children. Radiation, many chemicals, drugs (legal and illegal), cigarettes, and heat are examples of reproductive hazards.

Reproductive Hazards in the Workplace

- A number of workplace substances such as lead and radiation have been identified as reproductive hazards for women and men, but there is no complete list of reproductive hazards in the workplace
- Harmful substances can enter the body by inhalation, contact with the skin, or ingestion (if workers do not properly wash their hands before eating, drinking, or smoking)

Can A Worker Expose His Family To These Hazards?

- Workplace substances that affect workers may also indirectly cause harm to their families
- Certain substances unintentionally taken home by a worker may affect a woman's reproductive system or the health of an unborn child. For example, lead brought home from the workplace on a worker's skin, hair, clothes, shoes, tool box, or car can cause severe lead poisoning among family members and can cause neurobehavioral and growth effects in a fetus

Preventing Contamination at Work

- Store chemicals in sealed containers when not in use
- Wash hands before eating, drinking, or smoking
- Avoid skin contact with chemicals - if chemicals contact the skin, wash off immediately
- Become familiar with the potential reproductive hazards used in your workplace: consult the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or contact EH&S
- Participate in safety training, and follow the safety and health work practices/ procedures implemented by your department to prevent exposures to reproductive hazards

Preventing Contamination at Home

- Change out of contaminated clothes (at work)
- Wash with soap and water before going home
- Store street clothes in a separate area of the workplace to prevent contamination
- Wash work clothes separately from other laundry (at work if possible)
- Avoid taking contaminated clothing or other objects home

Call EH&S at 827-5528 or visit www.ehs.ucr.edu for additional information or to request an occupational exposure assessment.