



Did You Know?

By law your employer should:

- Provide a safe and healthy workplace
- Provide training for the job
- Encourage you to report hazards
- Provide the right protection such as gloves
- Inform you about workers' compensation

The law requires that you must:

- Follow safety rules and attend safety training
- Report unsafe work practices
- Report any skin problems or other injuries as soon as possible
- Wear protective clothing which is provided
- Keep work areas clean and tidy

Australian Capital Territory
www.workcover.act.gov.au

New South Wales
www.workcover.nsw.gov.au

Northern Territory
www.worksafe.nt.gov.au

OASCC
www.ascc.gov.au

Queensland
www.workcover.qld.gov.au

South Australia
www.workcover.com
www.safework.sa.gov.au

Tasmania
www.workcover.tas.gov.au

Victoria
www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Western Australia
www.workcover.wa.gov.au

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Mechanics

Some HANDy advice for the future Mechanic...



Mechanics include:

- Motor mechanics
- Diesel mechanics
- Fitters and turners
- Machine repairers
- Brake specialists
- Radiator repairers
- Transmission mechanics
- Automotive workers

What is dermatitis?

Work-related dermatitis is a skin condition caused by things that people touch at work. The hands are most commonly affected.

Dermatitis that affects mechanics includes:

- Irritant contact dermatitis - caused by things that dry out and damage the skin. These include detergents and soaps, brake fluids, grease and oils, solvents

- Allergic contact dermatitis - occurs when someone becomes allergic to something they touch at work. Allergic dermatitis shows up hours or days after contact.

Common causes are ingredients found in oils and rubber tyres.



Stop
this from
happening
to you

Prevent skin problems at work

- Avoid using strong hand cleaners with sand in them or solvents such as petrol to clean your hands



- Apply moisturising cream at the end of work and before bed. A sorbolene cream is best
- Wear the right gloves for the job - ask your boss

Remember
...You are
at high
risk of
dermatitis,
if you have
a history of
eczema,
asthma or
hay fever,
even if you
haven't had
it since you
were a
baby.

Case Study

James- Motor Mechanic

James was a 22 year-old motor mechanic. He handled parts and equipment that were always dirty. He was always getting oil, grease and solvent on his hands. Sometimes parts were left to soak in a strong cleaner and he put his hand in to get them out. During the day, he washed his hands with a strong gritty hand cleaner.

James' workplace provided him with gloves. He found them hard to work in, so he didn't use them.

James had dry skin as a child and now has asthma and hay fever in spring.

After 6 months of working, he noticed that his hands were becoming very dry and his skin began to crack

A few weeks later he visited his local doctor. The cause of his skin problem was irritation from the strong chemicals. He had two weeks off work to let his hands heal.

When he returned to work he began to use gloves, which he found hard at the beginning, but gradually got used to them. His boss also changed the way the parts were cleaned. He now uses a moisturising cream before and after work, so he can continue to work in the job he loves.

Points to learn from James' case

James may have been able to avoid skin problems by:

- Not putting his hand into the bucket of cleaner without wearing waterproof gloves
- Using a mild hand cleanser rather than a strong sandy hand cleaner
- Wearing the gloves that were given to him
- Speaking to his employer as soon as his hands became dry
- Using moisturiser