Skin Health Surveillance: Making it effective and beneficial

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Skin Health Surveillance: Making it effective and beneficial

• Why do skin health surveillance
• Key available methods
  • Questionnaires
  • Visual assessment
  • Skin condition measurement
• How can it be used
• Building effective systems
Why Bother?

• For a complete skin management system
• Our ‘Early warning’
• Regulatory requirements
• Economic implications
• Social effects
Key Methods

• Questionnaires
• Visual Assessment
• Skin Condition Measurement
Why a questionnaire is important

• To gain background information
• To provide information in a structured manner for analysis
• To ensure that all aspects are covered
• To ensure compliance with the regulations
• To raise awareness
• To help decide if a problem is occupational or not
• Gives time for acclimatisation and relaxation of the test subject
When to use a questionnaire

• Every time a skin health assessment is made
• When carrying out pre-placement assessment
• For skin health surveillance and monitoring

More than one questionnaire may be needed
Information in a questionnaire

- Name
- Occupation
- Age
- Male/female
- Right or left handed
- Description of work done
- Use of personal protective equipment
- Frequency of PPE use
- Frequency of chemical contact
- Skin Problems – current or previous
- Allergies?
- Medically Confirmed?
Information in a questionnaire

• Use of moisturiser
• Frequency of moisturiser use
• Skin care and cosmetic products used
• Housework??
• Dishwasher??

• Gloves for housework??
• Gloves at any other time??
• Hobbies
• Other non work activities
• Second job?
Suggested uses of the information

• To advise an individual

• To distinguish between occupational and non-occupational skin problems

• In management reports (e.g. to support the need for action)

• Identifying system weaknesses so that they can be addressed

• To provide supporting data for medical referral
Visual Assessment

- Visual and tactile examination of the skin
- Scoring system
  - Osnabrück scoring system
  - Simple scoring systems
- Comparison chart

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Osnabrueck Scoring System

- Six morphological signs of hand eczema
  - Erythema
  - Scaling
  - Papules
  - Vesicles
  - Infiltration
  - Fissuring
- Each given a score
- Scores are added for final score
Simple Scoring technique

• Look at the individual's skin
• Assign their skin a score based on the scoring system being used

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<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Skin looks normal</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 of</td>
<td>Dryness, Redness, discolouration, thickening, cracking, flaking, blisters, open sores, bleeding, infection</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 of</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4 of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 or more of</td>
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</table>
Visual Assessment

😊
Quick
Inexpensive
Can be done ‘on-site’
Valid for all visible skin conditions

😢
Subjective, no quantitative data
Requires experience/training
May not indicate sub-clinical damage
Surface conditions do not always correlate with conditions in the skin
Skin Condition Assessment

• Uses scientific equipment to measure skin parameters
• Different parameters build a picture of the condition of the skin
  • Transepidermal water loss
  • Skin hydration
  • Skin colour/pigmentation
  • pH
Important parameters

- Transepidermal Water Loss (TEWL)
  - Barrier function
- Skin Hydration
- Skin Colour (erythema)
  - Quantify rash
- Skin pH
  - Microorganism barrier
Skin Condition Assessment

是非

Non-invasive
Simple measurement methods
Quantitative data
May indicate sub-clinical damage
Can build a picture of skin condition

Yes

Only valid for certain skin conditions
Measurements can’t be made everywhere
How can it be used?

• Pre-placement assessment
• Identifying problem areas
• Health surveillance/monitoring
• Assessing intervention
• Investigating a problem
Setting up a skin health surveillance system

• Decide which techniques are relevant for your organisation
• Decide how you will use the techniques
• Set out what you will do and when
Increasing Resources: The importance of responsible people

• Only brief training required
• More frequent skin checks
• Non health and safety qualified personnel
  • Line manager
  • First aider
• Report those with problems
• Advise to seek assistance
Skin Health Surveillance System

• Involve colleagues to improve resources

• Set up a system including
  • Questionnaire
  • Visual assessment
  • Skin condition measurement

• Ensure regular monitoring of all employees
  • The frequency will depend on your organisation, the work carried out, and the number of employees
  • The more frequent the better particularly where exposure is to irritant chemicals or work situations
Case Study One: Engineers travelling around different locations

• Regional manager has regular meeting with each engineer (at least once per month)
• Regional managers were trained as responsible person
  • Questionnaires
  • Visual assessment
  • Skin condition measurements (hydration)
• Initially skin check & measurements made every 3 months
• Questionnaires with visual assessment results and skin condition measurements returned to health and safety team
• Results tracked any skin problems or decline in skin condition triggered input by health and safety team
Case Study Two: Engineering/Manufacturing site

- Annual health check conducted by occupational health service
- Monthly skin check conducted by responsible person
  - Simple yes or no skin check
- Those with ‘skin problem’ referred to health and safety department who call in occupational health service where necessary
Case Study Three: Health care setting

• Very large number of employees. Ratio of occupational health professional to worker greater than 1:1000
• Workers have initial health screen on starting employment
• Responsible person does skin check every 6-12 months
• Those with possible problems referred to occupational health department
• Spot checks conducted to ensure responsible people are carrying out the checks
• Workers can self refer to occupational health department with concerns
Thank you for your attention!

Questions?

If you think of any questions later, please feel free to contact us

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