



TOP COMPLIANCE (Pty) Ltd

Your Business' Safety Is Our Concern

QSE B-BBEE - Level Four

www.topcompliance.co.za

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Occupational Cancer

Occupational cancer is cancer that is caused solely or partly by exposure to a carcinogen at work.

Irrespective of whether you work in the formal or informal sector, and whether it's outside or indoors, both employers and employees, working in South Africa, should be made conversant with the cancer threats, risks and responsibilities associated with their occupation.

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that 19% of all cancers are attributable to the environment, which includes the work setting, and this amounts to 1.3 million deaths each year.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death worldwide according to the World Health Organisation, with a recent Lancet Medical Journal finding that South Africa can expect to see an increase in cancer cases.

Cancer is predominantly caused by environmental factors, rather than inherent biological factors. Importantly, it is possible to reduce exposure to many of these risk factors.

Environmental Factors that may cause cancer

- Infectious agents such as Human Papilloma Virus, Hepatitis B Virus and Hepatitis C Virus.
- Lifestyle-related risk factors such as tobacco use, poor diet, alcohol consumption, lack of physical activity and sun exposure.
- Exposure to environmental carcinogens and pollutants, such as benzene and formaldehyde.

What is a carcinogen?

A cancer-causing agent or factor is officially known as a carcinogen. Carcinogens attack the DNA of the cell, causing mutations. This can cause cells to divide or multiply out of control. These cancer cells multiply and grow into a lump or tumour that can spread to other parts of the body.

Your risk of getting cancer increases the more you are exposed to a carcinogen.

It is important to be aware of the different carcinogens and avoid or limit exposure to them in order to reduce your risk of getting cancer.

Occupational carcinogens in South Africa

Occupation related cancer exists in air pollution, UV radiation and indoor Radon. (Radon is a radioactive gas that forms naturally when uranium, thorium, or radium, which are radioactive metals break down in rocks, soil and groundwater. People can be exposed to Radon primarily from breathing Radon in air that comes through cracks and gaps in buildings and homes.)

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), lung cancer, mesothelioma (type of lung cancer), and bladder cancer are the most common types of occupational cancers.

Individuals in the South African workplace are protected by legislation including the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#), the [South African Hazardous Substances Act](#), as well as [The Asturias Declaration](#).

Being mindful of workplace health hazards, is the first step in ensuring that a healthy environment is created for all.

The most common examples of chemicals and compounds found in South African employment arenas, include:

- Asphalt fumes (coal tar pitch): – road tar workers.
- Benzene: workers who work with petrochemical compounds such as diesel fumes.
- Hexavalent chromium: workers who work with compounds including electroplating, welding, and chromate painting.
- Formaldehyde: workers in synthetic chemical industries and in beauty salons.
- Coke oven emissions: workers in the steel industry.

Man-made molecules

- Acrylamide – limit potato crisp intake, especially for children. (Acrylamide is a chemical that can form in some foods during high-temperature cooking processes, such as frying, roasting, and baking. Acrylamide in food forms from sugars and an amino acid that are naturally present in food; it does not come from food packaging or the environment.)
- Plasticisers – Use plasticiser-free clingwrap.
- Bisphenol A – avoid plastic that has a triangle with a number 3 and 7 in the centre and a PC indicated at the bottom, especially for baby feeding bottles. [More information on BPA](#).
- Trans fats – avoid food with more than 2% trans fatty acid like confectionary and processed foods. Only use margarines with less than 2% trans fats – Canola Blossom Margarine.
- Motor vehicle exhaust fumes – avoid inhalation of fumes.

Lifestyle risk factors:

- Tobacco – Don't use any tobacco products, including hookah pipes and e- cigarettes. Try also to avoid second-hand smoke. All tobacco products are harmful to health.
- Smoke from open fires – avoid direct smoke, ensure adequate ventilation.
- Hepatitis B Virus – adhere to childhood, as well as adult vaccination programmes.
- Human Papilloma Virus – vaccinate children; girls to partake in HPV Vaccine Programme and women to have regular Pap smears.
- UVA and B radiation – be SunSmart, protect yourself against excessive exposure. Stay safe in the sun, excessive ultraviolet exposure may cause skin cancer. Avoid the use of sunbeds and self-tanning products that contain Melanotan.
- Obesity.
- Poor diet.
- Alcohol limit or avoid alcohol consumption.
- Personal care products which may contain harmful chemicals.

Is it possible to work safely with a carcinogen?

The Occupational Health and Safety Act require that people who work with hazardous products have education and training about the potential hazards of the products and how to work with them safely. Information on the hazard

classification and how to work safely with that product is included on the Material Safety Data Sheets/Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs/SDSs).

There are many ways to control the hazards of any substance or agent.

A hazard control program consists of all steps necessary to protect workers from exposure, and the procedures required to monitor worker exposure and their health.

Knowing which control method is best can be a complicated process. It often involves doing a risk assessment to evaluate and prioritise the hazards and risks.

The following general advice can help you work safely with a carcinogen:

- Consult the MSDS/SDS for information about the hazards and necessary precautions for the specific carcinogenic product you are using.
- Understand all the hazards associated with the product, including additional health concerns (e.g., serious short-term health effects or irritation), reactivity and flammability.
- Know how to use the product safely to protect yourself and co-workers.
- Ensure engineering controls (e.g., ventilation) are operating. Closed handling systems may be necessary to prevent the release of the product (dust, mist, vapour, gas) into the workplace.
- Use the smallest quantity possible.
- Follow safe work procedures specified by your employer.
- Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment specified for the job. This equipment may include respiratory protection and chemical protective clothing, such as an apron and gloves, made from materials that protect against the chemicals being handled.
- Report ventilation failures, leaks, or spills to your supervisor immediately.
- Understand and practice emergency procedures so that you know what to do in case of a spill or other emergency.

Why is reducing exposure important?

Reducing exposure will reduce your risk of developing cancer from exposure to a carcinogen.

Typically, there are 3 important routes of exposure in a workplace setting — inhalation (breathing in), skin contact and ingestion (swallowing). In addition, there are several factors that can influence how likely a product is to cause a specific effect (e.g., cancer), for example:

- Route of entry into the body (e.g., some carcinogens will only cause cancer if inhaled, but not by skin contact).
- Amount or dose entering the body (in general, a higher exposure increases risk).
- Potency of the carcinogen (some carcinogens cause cancer if there is exposure to even a very small amount, while others may require intense exposure over many years).
- Individual susceptibility (e.g., some people may be more susceptible to developing cancer due to their genetic make-up).
- Personal habits (e.g., smoking acts synergistically with many carcinogens. This action means that if you smoke, your risk of developing cancer following a workplace exposure to a carcinogen is MUCH higher).

When considering if a person may have been exposed to a chemical, or if measures are being taken to reduce exposures currently in the workplace, there are many questions that should be asked. Some include:

- Inhalation (breathing in)
 - Is the work environment dirty?
 - Is respiratory protection worn (respirators)?
 - Is the hazardous agent used in an "open" or "closed" system?
- Skin contact/absorption
 - Is there skin contact?

- Is personal protective equipment worn (e.g., gloves, aprons)?
- Is work clothing laundered properly?
- Are proper hand washing facilities available?
- Ingestion (swallowing)
 - Is eating or smoking allowed in the work area?
 - Is food stored in the work area?

Another important factor is how long and how much a person was exposed to the agent. Duration (how long) of exposure to some agents may be infrequent or only in very small amounts, while others may be used daily or in very large amounts. The number of weeks or years on the job may provide an estimate of the degree of exposure. In general, the higher the exposure (duration and/or amount), the higher the risk of developing a health effect, including cancer.

For more information contact us or CANSA toll-free on 0800 22 66 22 or email info@cansa.org.za

Movember

Prostate cancer

*When detected early, prostate cancer survival rates are better than 98%. Find it late, and those survival rates drop below 26%. If you're **50**, you should be talking to your doctor about PSA testing. It's a simple routine blood test.*

The prostate gland is usually the size and shape of a walnut and grows bigger as you get older. It sits underneath the bladder and surrounds the urethra, which is the tube men urinate and ejaculate through. Its main job is to help make semen, the fluid that carries sperm.

Prostate cancer occurs when some of the cells in the prostate reproduce far more rapidly than normal, resulting in a tumour. Prostate cancer often grows slowly to start with and may never cause any problems. But some men have prostate cancer that is more likely to spread. These prostate cancer cells, if left untreated, may spread from the prostate and invade distant parts of the body, particularly the lymph nodes and bones, producing secondary tumours in a process known as metastasis.

Detecting prostate cancer

Not everyone experiences symptoms of prostate cancer. Many times, signs of prostate cancer are first detected by a doctor during a routine check-up.

Some men, however, will experience changes in urinary or sexual function that might indicate the presence of prostate cancer.

Signs and symptoms

- A need to urinate frequently, especially at night
- Difficulty starting urination or holding back urine
- Weak or interrupted flow of urine
- Painful or burning urination
- Difficulty in having an erection
- Painful ejaculation
- Blood in urine or semen

- Frequent pain or stiffness in the lower back, hips, or upper thighs

Testicular cancer

Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in young men aged 15 – 39.

Testicles are responsible for the production of male hormones (mostly testosterone) and sperm. Testicular cancer starts as an abnormal growth or tumour that develops in one or both testicles.

Signs and symptoms of testicular cancer include:

- A lump or enlargement in either testicle
- A feeling of heaviness in the scrotum
- A dull ache in the abdomen or groin
- A sudden collection of fluid in the scrotum
- Pain or discomfort in a testicle or the scrotum
- Enlargement or tenderness of the breasts
- Back pain

It is important to check yourself every month. Should you note any abnormal changes you should consult with your medical practitioner.

IF IN DOUBT - GO CHECK IT OUT.

References:

<https://businesstech.co.za/news/business/322791/what-employers-and-employees-should-know-about-cancer-survivors-in-the-workplace/>

<https://www.cansa.org.za/cancer-risks-at-work/>

<https://za.movember.com/mens-health/>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/testicular-cancer-care/symptoms-causes/syc-20352986>

https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/diseases/occupational_cancer.html

<https://www.topcompliance.co.za/index.php/products>



[Medical equipment](#)



[SANS Signage](#)



[Legal posters](#)



[Personal Protective Equipment](#)

Courses offered by Top Compliance (Pty) Ltd

First Aid Courses:		SACE CPTD points
First aid: Level 1	2 days	15
First aid: Level 2	3 days	15
First aid: Level 3	3 days	15
First aid: Level 1 & 2	3 days	30
First aid: Level 2 & 3	3 days	30
First aid: Level 1, 2 & 3	5 days	45
Child and infant CPR & choking	6 hours	0
Adult CPR & choking	6 hours	0
Adult CPR & choking and AED	1 day	0
Basic first aid equestrian groomers	1 day	0
Basic first aid domestic workers	1 day	0
Perform basic life support and first aid procedures	2 days	15
Provide risk-based primary emergency care/first aid in the workplace	2 days	15
Occupational Health and Safety Courses		
OHS Act & SHERQ representative	1 day	10
The Occupational Health and Safety Act & responsibilities of management	1 day	10
Apply health and safety at work area	1 days	10
Conduct workplace Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) inspections	1 day	10
Explain basic health and safety principles in and around the workplace	1 day	10
Food facility health & safety course	6 hours	0
Basic ladder safety	6 hours	0
Fire Fighting and Prevention Courses		
Basic firefighting	6 hours	10
Basic firefighting with emergency action planning	1 day	10
Basic firefighting with fire extinguisher practical	1 day	10
Basic firefighting and prevention in the equine industry	1 day	0
Demonstrate knowledge and use of hand operated firefighting equipment	1 day	10
Apply firefighting techniques	1 day	10

SKILLS PROGRAMS		SACE CPTD	Class days
First Aid Level 1,2 & 3 - HW/SP/1601190			
US 119567	Perform basic life support and first aid procedures	15	5 days
US 120496	Provide risk-based primary emergency care/first aid in the workplace		
US 376480	Provide first aid as an advanced first responder		
First Aider - HW/SP/1202005			
US 119567	Perform basic life support and first aid procedures	15	5 days
US 120496	Provide risk-based primary emergency care/first aid in the workplace		
US 13915	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of HIV/AIDS in a workplace, and its effects on a business sub-sector, own organisation and a specific workplace.		
First Aid (Basic) - HW/SP/150795			
US 119567	Perform basic life support and first aid procedures	15	4 days
US 9964	Apply health and safety to a work area		
Health, Safety and Fire Combination - HW/SP/1510179			
US 9964	Apply health and safety to a work area	10	5 days
US 119567	Perform basic life support and first aid procedures	15	
US 120331	Demonstrate knowledge pertaining to fires in working places	-	
Workplace SHE Rep - HW/SP/1510182			
US 9964	Apply health and safety to a work area	15	3 days
US 259639	Explain basic health and safety principles in and around the workplace		

First Aid and Safety Representative - HW/SP/1510183			
US 9964	Apply health and safety to a work area	15	4 days
US 119567	Perform basic life support and first aid procedures		
Safety Incident Investigation and inspections - HW/SP/1511233			
US 259617	Conduct an investigation into workplace safety, health and environmental incidents	10	2 days
US 259619	Conduct workplace Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) inspections		
First Aid and Firefighting - HW/SP/1511239			
US 120496	Provide risk-based primary emergency care/first aid in the workplace	15	4 days
US 13961	Demonstrate knowledge and use of hand operated firefighting equipment		
Fire and Rescue Skills Programme - HW/SP/1604338			
US 252250	Apply firefighting techniques	15	4 days
US 119567	Perform basic life support and first aid procedures	15	
Emergency First Aider - HW/SP/1605377			
US 119567	Perform basic life support and first aid procedures	15	5 days
US 120496	Provide risk-based primary emergency care/first aid in the workplace		
Safety Management - HW/SP/1601159			
US 9964	Apply health and safety to a work area	15	3 days
US 259639	Explain basic health and safety principles in and around the workplace		