OCCUPATIONAL SKIN DISEASES

ALLERGIC CONTACT DERMATITIS

Acute

Acute

Acute

Chronic

ACD-Post Inflammatory leukoderma

IRRITANT CONTACT DERMATITIS

Sub-acute

Acute

Chronic

ICD – Post inflammatory leukoderma

PIGMENTATION

Hyper

Hypo

URTICARIA

MILIRIA RUBRA

INFECTIONS

Bacterial

Fungal

Viral warts

CANCERS
OCCUPATIONAL SKIN DISEASES (OSDs)

OSDs are among the most common work-related diseases in industrialised countries and include contact dermatitis, pigmentation, urticaria, miliria rubra, infections and cancer. OSD has been described as a “hidden epidemic” as it is often under-diagnosed, under-reported and under-compensated in many countries, including South Africa (SA). The incidence rate is believed to be around 0.5–1.9 cases per 1000 full-time workers per year. Therefore the impact on time and output lost through OSDs is an underestimation as many cases go undetected. Early detection, correct diagnosis and treatment of these conditions can reduce the social impact and economic loss.

OCCUPATIONAL SKIN DISEASES CLINIC

- Consultation with a dermatologist with extensive experience in OSD
- Patch testing for ACD (several agents for different exposures)
- Specialised testing with workplace substances
- Comprehensive report with recommendations
- Site visit – where required

OCCUPATIONAL CONTACT DERMATITIS (OCD)

OCD accounts for up to 90% of all OSD and occurs in many industries and business sectors (see table below). There are 2 forms of OCD namely, irritant contact dermatitis (ICD) and allergic contact dermatitis (ACD). Although ICD is more common (70-80%), ACD has a worse prognosis, therefore identifying the causative agent/s is of great importance. Symptoms vary and include: itching, redness, pain, cracked skin, swelling, formation of small blisters or wheals, thickening of the skin & changes in pigmentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>SUBSTANCES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and farming</td>
<td>Crops, animal feed, veterinary medications, cement, pesticides, wood, preservatives, fertilisers, insecticides, solvents, disinfectants, cleaning agents, petrol, diesel oil, rubber.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automobile and aircraft industry workers</td>
<td>Solvents, cutting fluids, oils, grease, fiberglass, paints, skin cleansers, rubber, cobalt, nickel, resins, metals, antifreeze.</td>
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<td>Cleaners</td>
<td>Detergents, soaps, rubber gloves, polishes, fragrances, disinfectants.</td>
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<td>Construction workers and builders</td>
<td>Cement, chromates, epoxy resins, wood dust, paints, varnishes, nickel, rubber and leather, fiberglass, solvents, paint.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dentists and dental technicians</td>
<td>Local anaesthetic, mercury, acrylates, antibiotics, nickel, disinfectants, rubber gloves, dental impression material, soldering fluxes, wax, fluorides.</td>
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<td>Food and catering industry workers</td>
<td>Foods, flavours, gloves, anti-oxidants, preservatives, utensils, acetic acid, water emulsifying agents, detergents.</td>
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<td>Foundry workers</td>
<td>Phenol and urea formaldehyde resins, colophony, epoxy resins, cement, gloves, oils, skin cleansers.</td>
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<td>Hairdressers</td>
<td>Hair dyes, persulphate, nickel, fragrances, rubber gloves, permanent wave solutions, shampoos, bleaching agents, water.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health care workers</td>
<td>Anaesthetics, antibiotics, antiseptics, rubber gloves, preservatives, acrylate, detergents, disinfectants, water, soap, skin cleansers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>Solvents, fuels, fluids, grease, detergents, abrasive soaps, rubber, soldering fluxes, epoxy adhesives, antifreeze.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Painters</td>
<td>Turpentine, thinners, chromate, resin, formaldehyde, epoxy resin, adhesives, paints, solvents, hand cleaners.</td>
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