

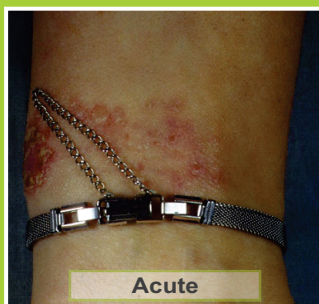


NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR  
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Division of the National Health Laboratory Service

# OCCUPATIONAL SKIN DISEASES

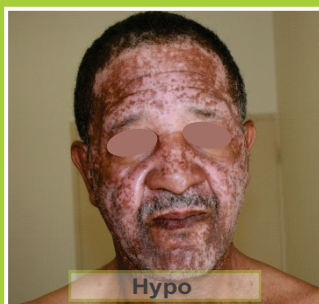
## ALLERGIC CONTACT DERMATITIS



## IRRITANT CONTACT DERMATITIS



## PIGMENTATION



## URTICARIA



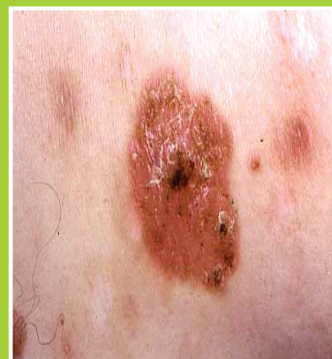
## MILIRIA RUBRA



## INFECTIONS



## 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.

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

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