



CEMENT

Before using Cement, you should read the COSHH assessment and follow any instructions or recommendations set out in it.

SKIN CONTACT

1. Cement can cause server injury, mainly by skin contact which can result in burns and dermatitis. Severe cases have lead to the amputation of limbs.
2. If freshly mixed concrete or mortar gets trapped against the skin, for instance by falling inside boot or glove, you can get serious skin burns or ulcers, which can take several months to heal and may need skin grafting.
3. Skin can be affected with dermatitis; it will feel itchy and sore and look red, scaly and cracked. There are two types:
 - Irritant dermatitis - results from direct damage to the skin caused by the combination of wetness, chemical corrosiveness and abrasiveness of cement in concrete and mortar
 - Allergic dermatitis - results when workers become sensitised to chromium salts present in the cement. Sensitisation to additives such as pigments, epoxy resins and hardeners can also occur

EYE CONTACT

1. Contact with cement powder or wet cement can cause irritation and inflammation. First Aid instructions on what to do will be included in the COSHH assessment.



INHALATION OF DUST

1. High levels of dust can be produced when cement is handled, for example when emptying bags of cement or during their disposal.
2. In the short term, exposure to high levels of cement dust irritates the nose and throat and causes difficulty when breathing.
3. There is uncertainty about the long-term health effects of breathing in cement dust, but chronic chest conditions can occur.
4. Abrading hardened concrete, such as when scabbling or cutting, can produce large amounts of inhalable dust which could contain high levels of silica, depending on the aggregate used.
5. Workers breathing in silica dust are at an increased risk of developing lung conditions, such as silicosis.

CONTROLLING EXPOSURE

1. Work in a way which minimises the amount of dust produced. Open bags with care and mix carefully. Handle dry cement powder in a well-ventilated area.

PERSONAL PROTECTION

1. When working with cement and cement mixtures you must protect your skin with:
 - gloves
 - long sleeves and full-length trousers
 - waterproof boots



2. Clothing should be worn to avoid 'traps' for fresh mortar or concrete to fall in. For instance, sleeves over gloves and trouser legs over boots – not tucked inside.
3. If trapping does happen, steps should be taken immediately to clean the contaminated skin and clothing.
4. Suitable respiratory protection must be worn if dusty conditions cannot be avoided.
5. Eye protection must be worn when conditions give rise to a risk of eye injury, such as opening cement bags during mixing when splashing might occur.

HYGIENE

1. Personal hygiene is important.
2. Wash your hands and face before eating, drinking and smoking and before using the toilet.
3. Clean off boots and clothing every day.

FIRST AID

1. Contaminated skin must be washed with cold running water as soon as possible.
2. Particular attention must be paid to any wound, which must be covered with a suitable dressing.



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3. Eye contamination must be washed with cold tap water for at least 10 minutes before the affected person is taken to hospital.
 4. Ensure a suitable first aid kit, with eye bath is available at all times.