

# Occupational Health Hazards and Safety

## Abstract

Occupational health and safety (OHS) is commonly referred to as occupational health, or occupational safety, and is a multidisciplinary field that is concerned with the health, safety, and welfare of people across all occupations. Due to the high number of accidents and exposure agents that occur in all kinds of workplaces and the consequences, this has for workers organizations society, and countries; occupational safety and health have become a very important issue for stakeholders to take care of the human resources. Occupational health and safety is a specialized branch of medicine that focuses on the physical and mental wellbeing of the employees in the workplace.

## Introduction

Health and Wellbeing of employees in the work place are important concerns that should continue to receive attention in any organization. Any kind of work related stress when combined with daily life stress lead to detrimental physical and emotional outcome due to excess physical and mental demand on the human body and mind. The health of nurses is a prime concern for any organization as they are the direct caregivers to the patient and their emotional and physical stability is needed for effective patient care for maintaining their standards in relation to patient safety [1]. The field of occupational health and safety (OHS) has become a topic of increasing importance over the last 30 years. The establishment of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in 1970 reflected the recognition that safety in the workplace is a basic expectation for all employees. Originally addressing concerns in industry and hazards associated with mechanical injury, the field of occupational health and safety has expanded to almost every workplace environment, from the office to the airplane, as well as to the laboratory and the vivarium [2]. A review of safety records pertinent to animal care occupations demonstrates that many of the health hazards encountered when working with nonhuman primates are not unique. A survey of accidental injuries associated with nonhuman primates at two national primate research centers documented a list of occupational injuries including bites, animal-inflicted scratches, needle sticks, cuts, and mucous membrane exposures (bin Zakaria and others 1996) [3,4].

## Risk of Occupational Health

**Loud noises:** Hazardous noise levels or exposure to loud noises can result in long-term hearing damage.

**Hazardous chemicals:** Whether a facility is manufacturing chemical substances or simply using cleaners with harsh chemicals, hazardous chemicals can cause a litany of health problems including rashes, eye injuries, burns, organ damage, or even death [5,6].

**Working from heights:** A fall from a platform, crane, roof, or derrick can cause life-altering injuries if workers are not properly equipped with fall protection.

**Poor air quality:** Risk in varied forms including needle stick injuries, harmful exposures to chemicals and hazardous drug, back injuries, latex allergy, violence and stress.

**Tripping hazards:** Seemingly innocuous, a wet surface or cluttered floor can result in slips, trips, or falls that cause serious injuries to a person [7,8].

## Result

Each profession has certain amount of occupational risk involved. The health care providers

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are the third major group who experience high number of work place injuries, as they are direct care providers [9,16]. Nurses do face considerable amount of risk in varied forms including needle stick injuries, harmful exposures to chemicals and hazardous drug, back injuries, latex allergy, violence and stress. The most common injuries reported are back injury and risk of infection [10,11].

The review used descriptive cross-sectional research design using secondary sources related to occupational health hazards among nurses. Very few studies have focused on the psychological hazards of nurses [12,15]. The review of articles has provided an insight on various kinds of occupational hazards that the nurses are exposed to base on the area of work, their experiences, age, Body Mass Index, training and their own negligence. The study mainly excluded radiological hazards and return to work program and employers responsibilities in prevention of these risk and exposure [13,14].

## Conclusion

Nurses are confronted to various kinds of occupational hazards due to their nature of work. Future interventions or a proper occupational infrastructure should be adapted by all the organizations to promote health and well-being of the staff. Key Words: Musculoskeletal injuries, depression, occupational hazard, needle stick injuries, workplace violence, exposure to blood borne pathogens, Stress, work related risk factors.

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## Conflict of Interest

None

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