



Hand Arm

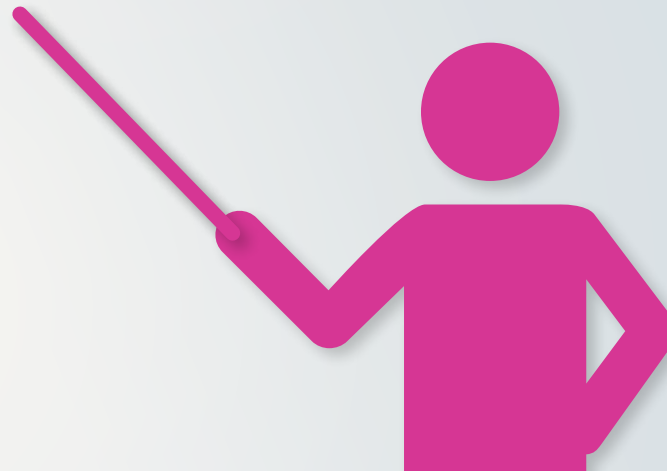
Vibration

Syndrome



What we'll cover today

- ⊖ What is **Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome** (HAVS)?
- ⊖ Things to **look out** for
- ⊖ When are you at risk?
- ⊖ How you can **reduce** the risk
- ⊖ The importance of Health **Surveillance**



What is Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)?




HAVS affects your hands, wrists and arms

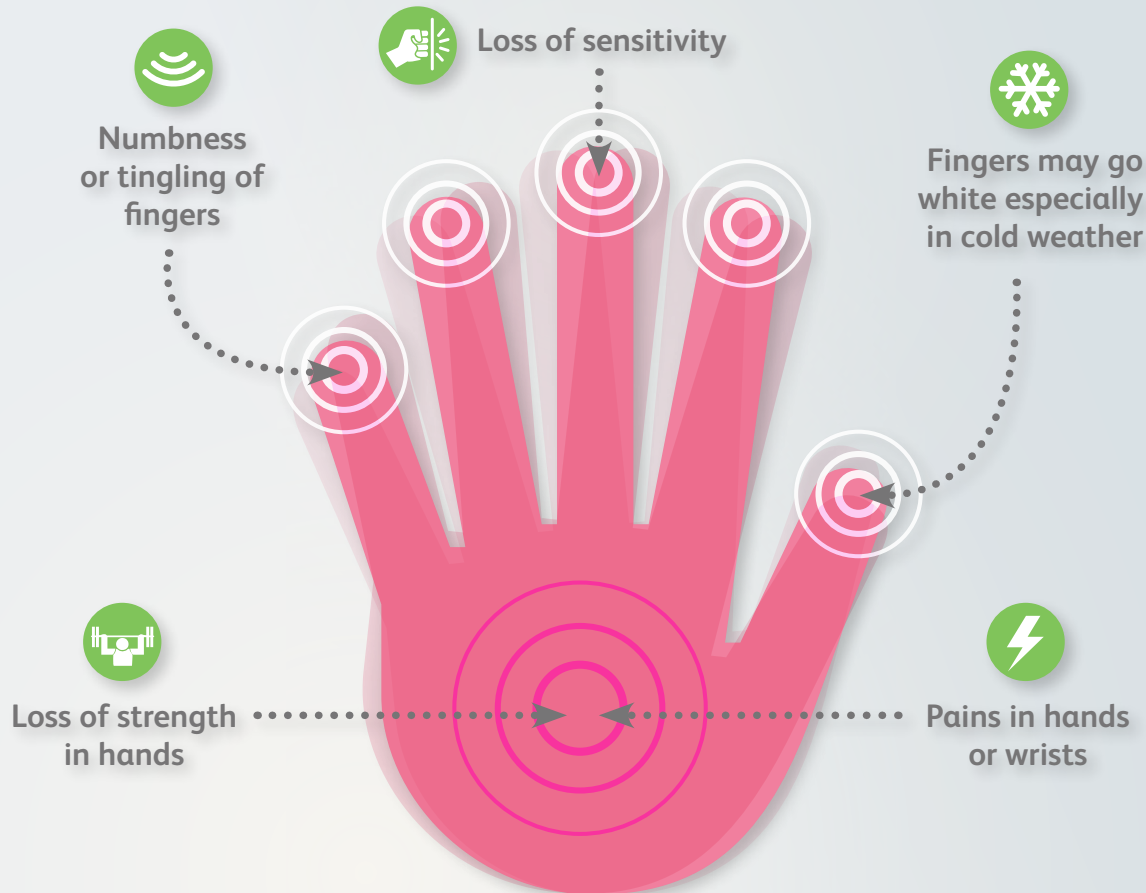
It's caused by **repeated use** of hand held vibrating tools

Some people may be affected sooner than others

The effects of HAVS can be **permanent** and **disabling**.



Effects of HAVS








When am I at risk?

You are at risk if you **regularly use** hand held or hand power tools and machines such as:

- ⊖ Breakers, concrete pokers
- ⊖ Sanders, grinders, disc cutters
- ⊖ Hammer drills
- ⊖ Chainsaws, brush cutters
- ⊖ Hedge trimmers
- ⊖ Needle gun.



Vibration facts

-  Vibration is **measured** by the amount of **time** you operate each tool – often known as ‘trigger time’
-  Each tool will vary in the amount of vibration it gives you
-  Older equipment that is not well maintained will increase your vibration **exposure**
-  There are **guidelines** as to how much exposure a person should have over a normal shift
-  If you reach the maximum exposure time for one tool don’t automatically **assume** you can then use another tool producing the same vibration.



Reducing your risk

REDUCING YOUR RISK CHECKLIST 1

- ✓ Always use the tool in the **right way** for example use the handles rather than holding the body of the tool.
- ✓ Always use the **right tool** for the job.
- ✓ Check that the tool is in good **working order** before use.
- ✓ Ask to use suitable **low vibration** tools.

REDUCING YOUR RISK CHECKLIST 2

- ✓ Keep your **hands warm** and dry to encourage blood flow.
- ✓ Cut down or **quit smoking** as smoking reduces blood flow to your fingers.
- ✓ Keep your **fingers moving** during break to maintain good circulation.
- ✓ If you have **any worries tell your manager** as soon as you notice a problem.



Reducing the Risk



Your line manager can **assist** in **reducing** your risk of developing HAVS by arranging for employees to **rotate** the tasks using vibrating tools



This will ensure that the **risk** is **shared** amongst the team rather than one employee getting all of the vibration exposure



You must follow the task rotation instructions given by your line manager



Network Rail is working to continually progress the management of HAVS – **speak** to your **line manager** or **safety advisor** if you have any improvement ideas.



Do anti-vibration gloves work?

No.








There is **no proof** that anti vibration gloves will reduce your exposure to vibration.

The only benefit of wearing gloves are that they keep your hands warm so **help with your circulation.**



Health Surveillance

-  **Participation** in Health Surveillance is **mandatory** for those employees who are deemed at risk of health concerns from the use of vibrating tools
-  Health Surveillance is a **yearly check** which may be either a questionnaire or a face to face appointment
-  You **don't** have to **wait** for your annual review – if you have symptoms report them as soon as you can
-  Health Surveillance is aimed at helping you **spot** any **signs** of HAVS as **early as possible**, allowing you to stay at work and to give you **advice** on how to look after hands
-  Your line manager will be given advice on your **ability** to **work** with vibrating tools – this could include advice to use vibrating tools for **reduced periods** of **time**.



Key points

- ⊖ **Work safely** by using the right tools, for the right job, in the right way
- ⊖ Learn to **spot** signs of HAVS early
- ⊖ **Report** any health worries to your manager so that they can refer you for help and guidance from ***Occupational Health***
- ⊖ **Take part** in Health Surveillance when asked
- ⊖ For more **information** visit: Occupational Health and Wellbeing on ***Connect*** or ***Safety Central***.

