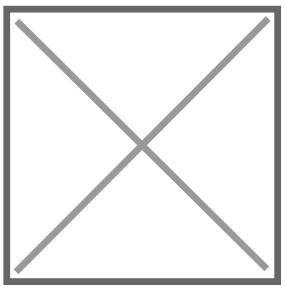

INVESTIGATION

INVESTIGATING A SUSPECTED OCCUPATIONAL SKIN PROBLEM

No matter how carefully we design and operate our skin management system, it is not possible to guarantee that there will never be a situation where someone develops what may appear to be an occupational skin problem. What is then essential is that this is correctly investigated, the true cause (or causes) established, and an appropriate management strategy developed and implemented.

As the diagram shows, this is not as simple and many assume. It is easy to reach a conclusion that may lead to incorrect action in terms of treatment and management which can actually exacerbate the problem.

To correctly identify the cause - or frequently causes - requires a full assessment of both occupational and non-occupational factors, frequently the support of a medical specialist - usually a consultant dermatologist specialising in contact dermatitis - and a detailed evaluation of both the clinical and environmental issues that can affect the conclusions and subsequent management.

EnviroDerm Services have many years' experience in investigating suspected skin problems for their clients and developing effective management strategies, always aimed at trying to keep the worker able to continue at their chosen work.

Our experience is that each case is unique and requires a structured and comprehensive approach, as described briefly overleaf.

The flow chart shows the approach that EnviroDerm Services has developed over many years. This, and our experience, is available to help you to determine the cause of a skin problem, establish whether this is a genuine occupational issue, and create an effective management strategy.

WE WILL:

Review the available information from health surveillance records, risk assessments and, where appropriate, case histories, and patient interview.

Study the actual workplace conditions to establish hazards and exposures and their potential relevance.

Where required, select - and collaborate with - the medical specialist (usually a consultant dermatologist experienced in this type of work) to help ensure an accurate and occupationally relevant clinical diagnosis.

Based on the information about the working environment, the individual's history and the clinical diagnosis, develop a strategy to manage the skin problem, where possible to keep that worker at work and free of skin problems.

Work with you to implement this strategy, implementing any adjustments that may be required to ensure that optimum results are achieved.

We can also provide expert reports should this become needed and assist in dealing with any regulatory issues

If you have a skin problem within your workplace consider benefitting from our experience and expertise.

Get In Touch