

# Medical Surveillance Fact Sheet For Employees

Use with Formaldehyde Rule, Chapter 296-856 WAC

You are strongly encouraged to participate in your employer's medical surveillance program. Participation in your employer's medical surveillance program will help to maintain a safe workplace and prevent illnesses associated with formaldehyde over-exposure. Components of a medical surveillance program include the following:

- Your employer should make sure a medical surveillance program is available to you under the following circumstances:
  - If your formaldehyde exposure is at concentrations above 0.5 ppm as an 8-hour average or 2 ppm over any 15-minute period
  - At no expense
  - At a reasonable time and place
  - At the time of initial assignment and once a year afterward as long as exposure is at least above the action level of 0.5 ppm, or the short term exposure limit (STEL) of 2 ppm
- If you have signs and symptoms that are related to formaldehyde exposure, inform your employer even if exposure is below the above concentrations.
- The surveillance plan should include:
  - A medical disease questionnaire
  - A physical examination if the physician determines this is necessary.
- If your exposure is above the PEL, you are required to wear a respirator, your employer should offer you a physical examination and a pulmonary function test every year.
- The physician should collect all information needed to determine whether you are at increased risk from exposure to formaldehyde.
- At the physician's discretion, the medical examination may include other tests to make this determination, such as a chest x-ray.
- After a medical examination, the physician should provide you with a written opinion which includes any special protective measures recommended and any restrictions on exposure.
- The physician should inform employees of any medical conditions they may have which would be aggravated by exposure to formaldehyde.
- Your employer is required to retain all records from medical examinations, including disease surveys. Additional information about employee medical records can be found in Chapter 296-802 WAC, Employee Exposure and Medical Records, a separate chapter.

