

# HAVS

## Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome

The hazards of vibration and symptoms of HAVS become more pronounced with prolonged exposure to vibration. Unfortunately, the effects of vibration on the body become more evident only when the symptoms get worse.

### Symptom Examples:

- Tingling and/or numbness of fingers
- Signs of whitening of the fingers
- Unable to sense light touch, Losing grip strength
- Growth of bone cysts on fingers and wrists

Hand-arm vibration is generated by both rotating and percussive hand-held tools. Some tools (such as hammer drills) are both rotary and percussive.

### Examples of Vibrating Tools:

Road and Concrete Breaker, Cut-off Saws or Disc Cutters, Power Drills and Chisels, Plate Vibrators and Scabblers, Concrete Poker Vibrators, Hammer Drills, Chainsaws, Needle Guns, Angle Grinders and Riveters

**YOU CAN TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT PERMANENT DAMAGE AFFECTING THE NERVES AND BLOOD VESSELS IN YOUR HANDS.**



**BC Forest Safety**

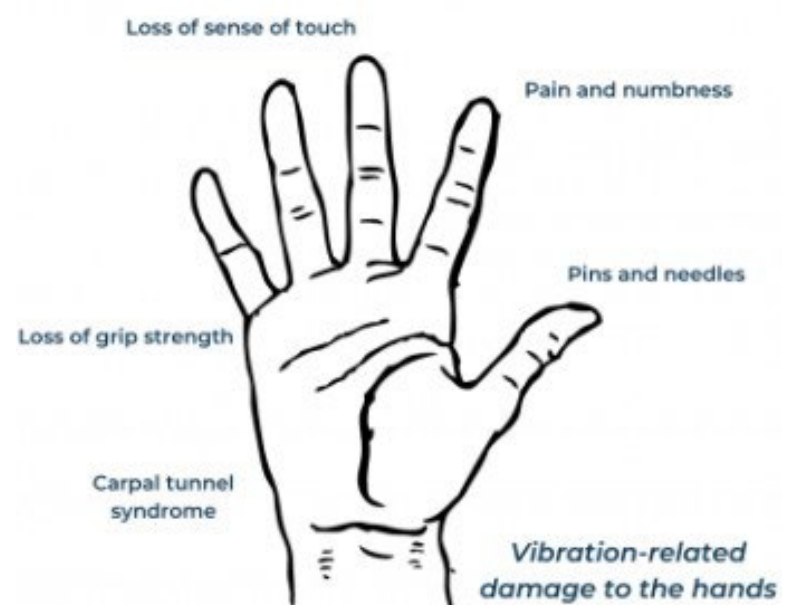
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# HAVS REDUCTION



## EFFECT OF HAND ARM VIBRATION

1. Prolonged exposure to hand-arm vibration can cause damage to blood vessels, nerves, tendons, ligaments, muscles, and bones.
2. Symptoms include tingling, pins and needles, loss of feeling in the fingers, pain and throbbing in the fingers, loss of manual dexterity, painful joints, and pain when the hands warm up after getting cold.
3. Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is also caused by hand-arm vibration and causes severe nerve pains in the palm of the hands, which is often worse at night.
4. The effects of hand-arm vibration are often irreversible, causing sufferers pain and affecting their quality of life.
5. People with HAVS are often unable to undertake simple, everyday tasks (such as doing up buttons or shoelaces).
6. The symptoms may start as tingling in the hands but will develop and worsen with continued exposure to vibration.



## HOW TO AVOID EXCESSIVE VIBRATION EXPOSURE

- Try to avoid the use of hand-held tools that generate vibration (for example, by using an excavator-mounted or remote-controlled breaker rather than hand-held breakers).
- If it is not possible to avoid using hand-held tools, then select low-vibration or vibration-reduced tools.
- Calculate trigger time limits for using vibrating tools and do not exceed them.
- When using vibrating tools, it is important to take regular breaks. If working in a cold environment, warm your hands up and exercise your fingers during breaks.
- Use a good technique when using hand-held tools – do not grip too tightly or apply excessive force; let the tool do the work.
- Keep hands warm and dry by wearing gloves. However, do not rely on anti-vibration gloves as they have little effect on vibration.
- If you experience any symptoms (such as pins and needles), tell your supervisor.

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