

TAKING MEDICINES (1/2)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Of greatest concern are tranquilisers, barbiturates like Valium and Librium, antipsychotics and anticoagulants. You should inform your HSE Manager about any medicine, even aspirin, that you take. In combination with other medicines - including those administered in medical emergencies - even such 'benign' substances can have undesirable or unpredictable effects.

1. Before starting work, notify your HSE Manager of any medicines you are taking.
2. Submit a doctor's note, if you have one.
3. Ensure that emergency and rescue workers are also informed as to what medicines you are taking.
4. For your own safety and that of others, take medicines responsibly and only as prescribed, strictly adhering to the directions!
5. Some medicines can impair your judgement and/or reaction time.

QUESTIONS? MORE INFORMATION? UNSAFE WORKING CONDITIONS?

Your HSE Manager is there to help answer any questions and ensure a safe working environment for all.

WHAT IS IT?

Most people have been prescribed medication during varying times in their lives. It is important to advise your workplace when such situations occur. Some medicines can impair your judgement and/or reaction time. Most of us don't take the time to ask either the doctor or the pharmacist about side effects from the medications we are taking, especially whether these drugs could impair our abilities in any way. It is therefore important that your company is aware whenever you are taking medication.

HAZARDS

Many medicines have undesirable side-effects. In certain doses they can impair your ability to function properly in the workplace. However, that is not the only danger they present. If you have an accident or are taken ill and the medics or first aiders do not know what medicines you are taking, they could make an incorrect diagnosis and give you the wrong treatment. That could place your life in danger.

PREVENTION

When your doctor prescribes a medicine, or if you are buying an over-the-counter preparation from your pharmacy, questions to ask in relation to safety issues at work include:

- are there any associated problems with taking the medicine in relation to my current or potential future medical conditions?
- what are the possible side effects, such as drowsiness, and how can I manage these?
- what are the signs and symptoms of serious reactions that I need to watch out for?

BEFORE YOU START WORKING

Whether or not a work activity will be safe depends on various factors, including the nature of your medication and the task to be performed.

TAKING MEDICINES (2/2)

Before you start working discuss the medicines you take, and their side effects, with your HSE Manager. This includes prescription and non-prescription drugs, and also homeopathic and herbal medicines excluding off-the-shelf products like supplements).

PROTECTION

General workplace rules:

- know the location where you are going to work
 - understand the risks
 - identify potential hazards
 - deal with potential and actual hazards
 - look after your work areas
 - reduce workplace stress
 - take regular breaks
 - use mechanical aids whenever possible
 - wear Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) appropriate to the task
 - if necessary wear additional Personal Protection Equipment appropriate to the task
 - know how to correctly use safety equipment
 - stay sober
 - never work whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol, as you are a hazard to yourself and your colleagues
 - stay completely alert on the job
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IN CASE OF...

Any incident that occurs during work can have a severe impact on people, installations and the environment. Make sure that you are familiar with the right procedure in case incidents occur. If not, ask your company.
