

# Fact Sheet

## Health Surveillance

Health surveillance is not needed for most workers, but in some work situations and for some exposures/activities it is required by law.

This means having a system to look for early signs of ill health caused by substances and other hazards at work. It includes keeping health records for individuals and may involve routine self checks, questionnaires or medical examinations to inform the employer (or self employed person) if corrective action is needed.

Corrective action may involve referral for treatment and/or adaptations to work for individuals affected. More importantly, as an indication that controls may be failing, it should ensure review of risk management and action to prevent further harmful exposures.

### What do I have to do?

If you need to have health surveillance arrangements in place, these should be appropriate for the health risks your workers are exposed to. You must decide whether the work you do needs health surveillance.

Ask yourself whether any of your workers is at risk from, for example:

- noise or vibration
- solvents, fumes, dusts, biological agents and other substances hazardous to health
- asbestos, lead or work in compressed air
- ionising radiations or commercial diving these require a particular type of high level medical surveillance, which must be carried out by a doctor appointed for these purposes by HSE

If you do need to put in place a health surveillance system, involve your workers and their representatives at an early stage, so they understand its purpose and their roles and responsibilities in any resulting health surveillance programme.

Ask for advice from a competent person if you need to, such as an occupational health professional.

### Health Surveillance further reading

