



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Advanced Safety Training

Module 3

Workplace Ergonomics/Occupational Exposures

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Welcome to Advanced Safety Training module 3

- The material for this course has been developed based on risk assessments, and in consultation with front line staff across the province.
- This module focuses on risks and safety measures related to workplace ergonomics (client and equipment handling, driving discomfort) and occupational exposures.
- There are two parts to the module: this presentation pdf file and a quiz to evaluate your learning. We suggest you have both documents open as you go through the course and when you are prompted with questions in the presentation you can put your answers into the Quiz PDF.
- The questions have been designed to help you retain key messages from the module and ensure you know the location of information and physical resources for future reference.
- This course can be completed over several days, so make sure you regularly save your Quiz PDF so you do not lose any work you have done on it. Unfortunately this file does not automatically track how far along you are in the process, so if you shut down your computer you will have to remember how far you are when you re-open it and renew your studies.

DISCLAIMER: This module is required learning for those who work alone or in isolation, work directly with clients, and/or travel for work. This includes contracted workers. However, it has not been customized for each occupational group so some of the information covered in this module may not seem relevant to the job you do within FNHA.



FNHA Mission Directives and Values

FNHA's commitment to employee safety is supported by FNHA's 7 Directives, in particular:

#3 – Improve Services

#5 – Develop Human and Economic Capacity

#7 – Function at a High Operational Standard

In addition, it fully supports FNHA's Wellness Operating Principles. A safe and secure workspace supports individual employees wellness, protects them against injury and improves the quality of services we are able to deliver to our clients.





Learning objectives

- Client and Equipment handling
 - Locate resources for preventing MSI injuries
 - List basic principles of safe client lifting/transferring
 - Locate information and training on safe lifting of equipment
 - Describe safety measures to prevent injuries from prolonged sitting or driving
- Occupational Exposures
 - Determine if you qualify for an immunization assessment
 - Summarize the steps required for timely treatment of blood/body fluid exposures
 - Understand the services provided by the Occupational Health Nurse



Where to find resources

The resources mentioned in this training module can be found on the Bighouse OH&S team site.

Go to:

- [Occupational Health and Safety team page](#)
 - OHS forms and shared documents



Workplace Ergonomics

This module focuses on the risks related to client handling, equipment/materials handling and driving discomfort.

- Please revisit Basic Safety Training for resources and procedures related to setting up your workstation
- A reminder that musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) can result from overuse and develop over time.
- Any of these activities may result in discomfort or pain:
 - Frequent driving
 - Prolonged sitting
 - Lifting, carrying, pulling or pushing loads

Check out the [Ergonomics page](#) for resources related to the hazards of these job activities.



Client Handling





Client Handling

- Client handling requirements among workers in client-facing positions are rare.
 - Nurses will, on occasion, be required to transfer clients from a stretcher to an EMS stretcher or from a stretcher to a wheelchair.
- Avoid hazardous client handling tasks except in emergency situations.
- In rare situations where a client falls, it's important to resist the urge to 'catch' a client because it could result in injury.
 - If you must break a fall, do it by bracing your body rather than reaching out with your arms.
 - Where necessary to transfer a client, be sure to work with a partner (another nurse or a family member) and use transfer boards or slider sheets.



Equipment / materials handling





Equipment / materials handling

- **Traveling to community:** ship boxes where practicable rather than transporting them in your vehicle and/or arrange for community members to assist with handling once in community.
- **Moving items in and out of storage lockers:** take the 30-minute online [Safe Lifting course](#) and use equipment (e.g., dollies, carts) designed to minimize injuries.
- **Before you lift, carry, push or pull loads:**
 - Know your weight limit.
 - Estimate the weight of the load, the frequency of the task, how easy (or hard) it is to grip the load, and the distance the load will be manoeuvred.
 - Wear gloves if needed to grip your load
- **Busy traffic areas (e.g., back lane, highway):** wear a high visibility vest for the duration of the task



Equipment / materials handling

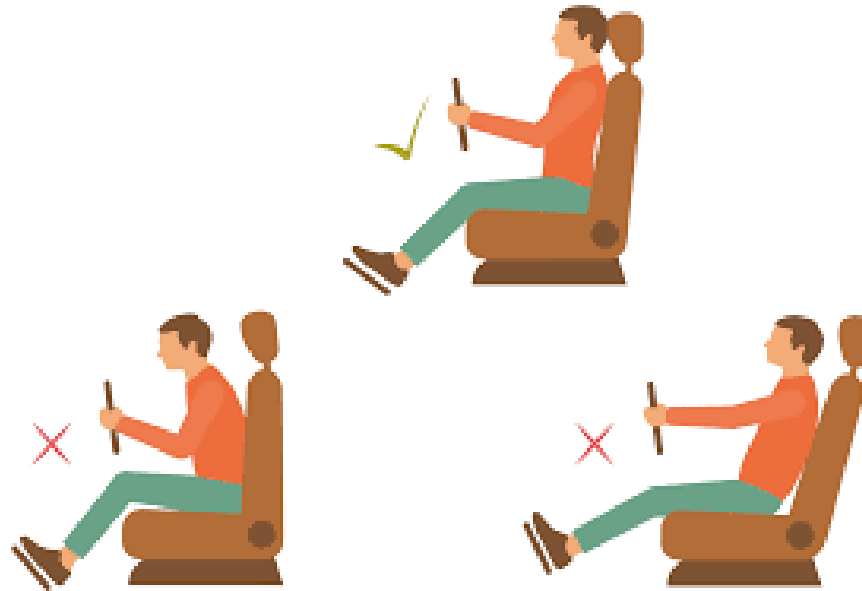
Online handling guidelines are available that are easy to use and will tell you if you need to use equipment to accomplish the task.

ACTIVITY: Find the Lift and Lower Calculator and the Push Pull Carry Calculator under **Additional Resources** on the OH&S Ergonomics page on the Bighouse.

Contact safetymatters@fnha.ca if you need assistance.



Risks of prolonged driving



ACTIVITY: When is prolonged periods of driving likely to cause problems for you? Do you have any pre-existing injuries likely to be worsened by driving?



Risks of prolonged driving

- Those who drive for 20 hours per week or more are at an increased risk for musculoskeletal injuries.
- Driving forces the driver to sit in a constrained posture for lengthy periods of time.
- Research within a group of business drivers showed reports of low back trouble (65%), neck trouble (43%) and shoulder trouble (40%).
- Causes of discomfort include:
 1. Poor posture due to personal habits or improperly adjusted or fitted seats
 2. Stress/tension
 3. Static and extended posture/position
 4. Wrong-sized vehicle for the individual or the job
 5. Vibration which may contribute to lower back pain and performance problems like blurred vision, drowsiness, decrease in manual coordination, headaches or upset stomach.



Tips to ease driving discomfort



- Alternate longer drives with shorter drives
- Take rest breaks at least once an hour, more if necessary
- Suggested work days rotation: Drive 2 days, work in office 1 day, drive 2 days then rest over 2 day weekend.



More tips to ease driving discomfort

- Buckle up!
- Adjust seat height and seat pan angle so it doesn't put pressure on selected parts of the legs, back and buttocks leading to pain at pressure point or affecting blood flow to the legs and feet
- Adjust steering wheel
- Adjust mirrors, headrest and distance to pedals
- Make sure your seat is high enough that you can see at least 3 inches over the top of the steering wheel
- Ensure you have sufficient room between the roof and the top of your head
- Ensure your back has the proper lumbar support. Use a lumbar pillow or rolled towel.
- Seat back tilt should be between 100 and 110 degrees (slightly reclined). If leaning too far back you may be craning your neck forward.
- Seat pan depth: Make sure you can place 2-3 fingers between the back of the knee and the front of the seat.



Occupational Health Nurse

- Support employees when they are experiencing illness, injury and/or disability arising from or aggravated by work
- Provide health evaluations, immunizations, prevention of exposure to infectious diseases training, consultation with employees, managers, human resources and labour relations personnel with regards to Disability Case Management e.g., return-to-work and medical accommodations
- Promote workplace wellness and prevention of illness, injury or disability



Who needs health evaluations and TB assessment?





Who needs health evaluations and TB assessment?

- At present, front-line health care workers are provided health evaluations and Tuberculosis screening and immunizations.
 - Front-line healthcare workers are the employees who provide health care services face-to-face with clients or patients in health care settings, including community members' homes.
- All front-line health care workers fall under the **Immunization and TB Screening Policy** that was in effect as of October 2014.
 - HS&W offers health evaluations and TB screening.
- **Immunizations, where indicated**, are rendered to protect the employees from contracting work-related, vaccine-preventable infectious diseases.
 - Likewise, when employees are immunized, they also protect the community members from these infectious diseases.
- Appointments for health evaluations and TB screenings can be made by emailing OHN.Clinic@fnha.ca



Health Evaluations





Health Evaluations

- Conducted to ensure front-line employees are healthy and fit to perform the bona fide occupational requirements of the position or job.
- **Two types:**
 - Pre-placement – before the job is offered
 - Periodic – conducted every few years for incumbent employees



Pre-placement

- An employee is referred by the Human Resources staff to see a doctor, nurse practitioner or the Occupational Health Nurse for a check-up before a job offer is made.
- The health conditions that are discussed are only those that relate to work, tasks, environment or conditions surrounding employment.
- The main question asked of the health care provider is: Is the employee fit for this job?
- Human Resources is made aware of whether an employee met the medical requirement of the job or not.
- No medical information is released to the HR staff or manager.



Periodic

- An employee is referred by the manager to the OHN.
- The OHN may do the evaluation or check-up.
 - If the employee lives very far from the OHN office, he/she may be referred to his/her Family Physician or Nurse Practitioner for the evaluation.
- The health conditions that are discussed are only those that relate to work, tasks, environment or conditions surrounding employment.
- The main questions asked of the health care provider are: Is the employee fit for the job and does the job continue to fit the employee?
 - The goal is that no health condition arises or is aggravated by work.
- The OHN will keep confidential all medical documents submitted by the health care practitioner or the employee.



What immunizations might I need?





What immunizations might I need?

- Immunizations are offered for any of the following diseases where no records are available or immunizations are out of date:
 - Influenza (annually)
 - Tetanus-diphtheria (Td) OR Tetanus-diphtheria with acellular pertussis (whooping cough) Tdap (every 10 years)
 - Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) (2 doses recommended)
 - Hepatitis A and B
 - Varicella (chickenpox)
 - Other recommended vaccines of work-related nature
 - For more information, visit: <http://www.immunizebc.ca>
- 2-step TB skin test and screening
 - A health care worker is offered this Tuberculosis skin test to obtain an accurate TB status.



Protecting yourself and others from airborne exposures





Protecting yourself and others from airborne exposures

- Face-to-face interactions with clients put workers at risk of exposure to respiratory or air-borne infections such as:
 - Measles
 - Influenza
 - Tuberculosis
 - Pertussis (whooping cough)



Protecting yourself and others from airborne exposures

- If you work as a frontline health care worker, be sure to employ universal precautions such as:
 - Frequent handwashing
 - Not touching the face
 - Covering your cough or sneeze
 - Cleaning frequently touched surfaces
- Be aware of appropriate safety measures for each of these diseases that, in addition to immunization, require use of either surgical masks (influenza) or N95 respirators (measles, TB and pertussis).
- Ensure you are fit-tested annually for N95 respirators and have access to an adequate supply of the model of respirator you are fitted for.

NOTE: Workers should have discussions with their manager on when the use of N95 respirator is required. These respirators are not to be used as part of daily practice.

- Other recommended practices include:
 - Staying home when sick
 - Getting immunized
 - Adopting a healthy lifestyle through nutrition, exercise, rest and recreation which help boost our immune system



Blood and body fluid exposures

- Blood and body fluid exposure is an event where a person is exposed to potentially infectious blood or body fluids through the following:
 - Puncture of skin by needle-stick or another sharp object;
 - Contact with mucous membranes; or
 - Non-intact skin exposure through eczema, scratches, and damaged skin.



Blood and body fluid exposures

- The risk of Blood and Body Fluid (BBF) exposure is a day-to-day reality for those who work directly with patients, particularly nurses and dental therapists.
- The rate of infections from blood borne exposures is not high, but workers need to be vigilant when performing their tasks to prevent exposures.
- Two ways to help minimize BBF exposures are:
 - Keep broken skin covered (e.g., with appropriate bandage, wear gloves)
 - Keep eyes and mucous membranes covered (e.g., with eye protectors)



Blood and body fluid exposures

- Ensure you are up-to-date with your immunizations and that your titres are protective.
- Get tested for blood-borne diseases. Ensure you participate in workplace safety orientation and orientation specific to your work unit.
- If you are a nurse or dental therapist, download the BCCDC Blood and Body Fluid Exposure Management tool and keep it handy for reference.
- If you have an exposure, attend a medical facility within two hours. If this is not possible, call your nearest medical facility for advice about exposure management.
- Following consultation and treatment, complete and submit an Employee Incident Report form, regardless of whether the incident meets the criteria for exposure or is simply an injury.
- Questions? Contact the Occupational Health Nurse at OHN.Clinic@fnha.ca



Thank You!

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Thank you for completing this Advanced Safety Orientation module 3 – Musculoskeletal injuries and Occupational Exposures.

Please make sure you complete the accompanying quiz document so we have a record of your successful completion.

Congratulations! You have now completed all three modules of the Advanced Safety Training.

We wish you all the best in your work at FNHA and hope that you have a safe and enjoyable experience. If you have questions or comments on this training or any other workplace safety topics please contact safetymatters@fnha.ca.

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Course Resources

FNHA

- [OH&S team site home page](#)
 - My Health at Work
 - My Safety at Work
 - My Return to Work
 - Occupational Health and Safety policy documents
- Respectful Workplace Policy–under [Resources & Tools](#)

External resources

- [WorkSafeBC health care sector resource list](#)
- [Preventing violence in Health Care](#)
- [BCCDC Blood and Body Fluid Exposure Management Tool](#)