

Construction Safety — Cement and Dermatitis

Cement is a major cause of skin irritation: The more lime it contains, the more irritating the cement is to the skin. Adding water to cement generates heat, thus aiding the possibility of reddening or burning of the skin upon contact.

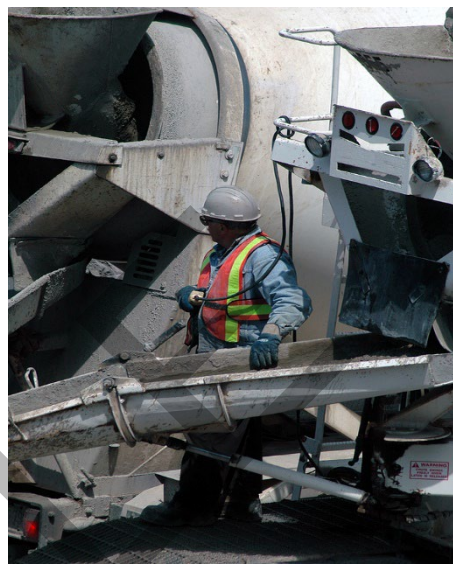
Avoid dermatitis: When cement with little moisture comes into contact with the skin, the skin becomes hard, dry and thickened. The dry skin is then likely to crack and become fissured, allowing ulcers to slowly develop. The nails become dry and brittle. Cement can also cause inflammation of the eyelids and chronic conjunctivitis. Ulcers can result in the mucous membranes of the nose and mouth upon inhalation of cement.

Primary factors which can contribute to the development of dermatitis:

- **Excessive sweating:** Workers who perspire freely are more likely to develop cement dermatitis on the exposed parts of the body. For this reason, cement dermatitis occurs more frequently in hot weather.
- **Poor hygiene.**
- **Pre-existing conditions:** Workers who have non-occupational dermatitis or allergies.

Proactive safety measure to protect against and treat dermatitis:

- **Proper personal hygiene:** This is the most important facet in the prevention of dermatitis in cement workers. Workers should know the proper preventive measures, including showers after each shift and fresh changes of clothing on a daily basis. During the work shift, a lanolin-based soap should be used to wash hands.
- **Skin cleaners:** Dermatitis may also be caused by using harsh or poor-quality skin cleansers, especially if you have dry skin or work with alkalis. It is believed that lanolin is the best agent to counteract the fat removing and dehydrating action of harsh soap on the skin. A water-type barrier cream can also be effective.
- **Using Lanolin before putting on gloves:** Apply to exposed areas before putting on gloves, for those workers who are inclined to develop dryness and cracking of the skin.
- **Medical care:** Should be sought for those who develop dermatitis. If necessary, workers suffering from dermatitis should be taken off the job until they recover.



*With reasonable care and cleanliness,
cement dermatitis need not occur
among workers with normal skin.*

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This form documents that the training specified above was presented to the listed participants. By signing below, each participant acknowledges receiving this training.

Organization: _____ Date: _____

Trainer: _____ Trainer's Signature: _____

Class Participants:

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

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