

Dermatitis can be an itchy, painful and sometimes disabling condition. This Staff information sheet provides you with a reference sheet of the key elements of effective skin health management practice. It should be read in conjunction with NHS Tayside's Skin Health Surveillance Policy, associated appendices and Skin Health Webpage contents on Staffnet.

To minimise your potential for developing a work-related skin problem:

- Hand jewellery is not acceptable other than one plain band. Rings encourage the build-up of skin irritants and cause skin rubbing which can damage your skin.
- Don't wear gloves unless necessary following a risk assessment and choose the type of glove to be worn in accordance with NHS Tayside policy and guidance.
- Do not use powdered gloves. Wear the correct size of glove.
- Never wear or handle latex products if you are allergic to latex.
- Remember that Alcohol Based Hand Rubs (ABHRs) provide an emollient effect whilst decontaminating your skin; as well as being portable and therefore more convenient.
- Use hand wash agents sparingly. Remember one detergent based handwash will strip out natural oils and fats from your skin and increase irritant effects.
- If you must wash; use tepid water and wet hands before applying hand wash. Rinse your hands thoroughly to remove all remaining traces of hand wash. Pat skin dry with soft disposable towels; don't rub.
- Thoroughly dry your hands before donning gloves.
- Following the correct technique for washing and gelling will help limit damage to skin
- Ensure that you apply hospital supplied hand cream (non-perfumed, water-based) at least a couple of times a shift and certainly before breaks/end of shift. This will help reduce dryness and make the skin less susceptible to irritation. Apply more often when you can if your skin is prone to dryness or you have an underlying skin condition.
- Do not use emollients before donning gloves
- All products should be obtained via the Supplies Department or Pharmacy who will only stock approved products however, if you have been prescribed a product for use at work, this is acceptable practice but you must inform your line manager.
- Staff should follow advice on the correct choice and use of hand hygiene products. If in any doubt, ask your line manager.
- Remember also to protect your hands outside of work, for example when gardening, doing household chores, hobbies or working with motor oils, strong chemicals or detergents.

Dermatitis is easier to treat if recognised early. If you are concerned about a skin condition you must inform your line manager and Responsible Person Skin. You can if wished also consult your GP.

More information on skin conditions can be found on

The National Eczema Society's website: www.eczema.org

The HSE's website: www.hse.gov.uk/skin

British Association of Dermatologists website: www.bad.org.uk

File Name: NHS Tayside Skin Health Management Staff Information Paper	Issue V1	Date: 21:02:2017
Originator: Margaret Kennedy, H&S Lead Infection Control	Page 1 of 1	Review: 31:03:2018