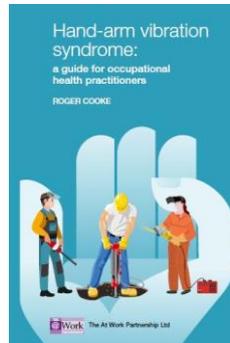


Press release – for immediate release

New book: Hand–arm vibration syndrome: a guide for occupational health practitioners



Hand–arm vibration syndrome: a guide for occupational health practitioners, by consultant occupational physician Dr Roger Cooke.

Hand–arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) is a significant occupational disease. In the UK alone, there are over 250,000 sufferers. This new book from occupational physician Dr Roger Cooke is a practical guide to HAVS and other conditions related to hand–arm vibration exposure and focuses on best practice in their diagnosis and occupational health management. Expertly written and widely researched, it will be an indispensable resource for professionals working in occupational health, occupational hygiene and health and safety at work. And with expert legal contributions from barristers Doug Cooper and Diana Kloss on the legal framework, prosecutions and common law negligence, this book is an essential resource for anyone working in the field.

It is over 100 years since HAVS – formerly known as ‘vibration white finger’ – was first identified among workers who were exposed to hand-transmitted vibration. In recent years it has become one of the most important occupational diseases in terms of incidence, health and safety enforcement and compensation.

A failure to control exposure to vibration and to implement health surveillance has led to many prosecutions by the Health and Safety Executive. In 2018, a well-known multinational construction firm was fined £0.5 million, with costs of nearly £200,000, for various legal breaches that led to numerous HAVS

cases. As recently as November 2020, an engineering firm was fined £300,000 for similar breaches. Employer's liability insurance payouts for HAVS can also be sizeable – reportedly reaching nearly £120,000 in one recent case.

But it is the cost to individuals that makes prevention of this occupational disease so important, with those affected suffering debilitating symptoms and, in the most serious cases, disability and worklessness. It is essential that cases are picked up early, to prevent progression and to identify control measures to protect other workers.

The diagnoses of HAVS and carpal tunnel syndrome require an understanding of the engineering and workplace aspects, epidemiology and clinical features of the conditions. *Hand–arm vibration syndrome: a guide for occupational health practitioners* combines the authority of an academic textbook with accessible, valuable and practical advice.

The book explains the statutory framework – including the risk-assessment and health-surveillance requirements of the *Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005* and the disease-reporting duties under the *Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013* (RIDDOR). It also explores recent prosecutions and common-law judgments. Importantly, it identifies the practical measures that can be implemented to address the health implications of occupational exposure to vibration.

As the only currently available book covering all of these aspects, it will be an indispensable resource for all professionals dealing with the subject, whether as occupational health, hygiene and safety practitioners, legal advisers or managers.

Author Dr Roger Cooke says:

“HAVS is an important occupational disease with disabling symptoms, with more than 250,000 sufferers in the UK alone.

“Individuals with the condition typically suffer from sensory symptoms of tingling and numbness, vascular symptoms of Raynaud’s phenomenon, and a variety of musculoskeletal problems. However, most of these symptoms can also occur in other conditions, so the real clinical challenge is to ensure accurate diagnosis, which enables appropriate workplace management as part of the correct treatment.

“This book was born out of a professional interest in HAVS that has developed over the past 30 years. It is intended to assist the many colleagues who have to deal with this important subject.”

Hand–arm vibration syndrome: a guide for occupational health practitioners provides:

- Practical, up-to-date and clearly written guidance on the risk assessment, clinical diagnosis, prognosis and management of vibration-related diseases
- Detailed information on how to determine the severity and progress of the condition
- Comprehensive, expert explanations of employers’ legal obligations
- An important insight into other work-related conditions that may affect the hands
- Accessible advice for all employers, and for occupational health, human resources, legal and case-management professionals

‘The publication combines academic background with sound practical advice on the diagnosis and management of cases ... valuable as a reference guide for occupational health practitioners.’ Extract from the book’s foreword, by Dr Ian J Lawson MB BS, FFOM, FRCP, FRSPH.

Hand–arm vibration syndrome: a guide for occupational health practitioners, by consultant occupational physician Dr Roger Cooke. ISBN 978-0-9574407-1-5. Paperback, 160 pages. Price £47.50. Publication date 15 November 2020.

-ENDS-

Notes to editors

About the author:

Dr Roger Cooke MStJ, MB ChB, DIH, FFOM (RCP UK), DipIMC (RCS Edin), is a consultant in occupational medicine and an honorary senior lecturer at the Institute of Occupational and Environmental Medicine at the University of Birmingham. His experience and interest in vibration-related disease extends over three decades years, including clinical practice, teaching, advising industry and specialist groups, writing on the subject and acting as expert witness in legal proceedings. He is one of the country's most respected experts on hand–arm vibration syndrome.

About the publisher:

The At Work Partnership is an independent publishing organisation specialising in occupational health and disability at work issues. Established in 2003, it has become one of the leading providers of OH information through the publication of the journal *Occupational Health [at Work]*. It runs a portfolio of conferences and certificated training courses designed to help OH practitioners develop and enhance their practice. It is the publisher of the highly respected book, *Discrimination Law and Occupational Health Practice*. Over the past 17 years, The At Work Partnership has become renowned for its practical, plain-English explanations of complex OH issues.

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