

Take Action and Prevent Occupational Disease Today

For Immediate Release

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The Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) and the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) have collaborated to create Prevent Occupational Disease, an online repository of current and credible occupational disease resources from Canada and around the world, reminding us to Prevent Today for Health Tomorrow. The website, aimed at reducing illness and fatalities associated with occupational sources, is intended to help employers, supervisors, safety and health practitioners, and workers alike increase their understanding of occupational diseases and ways they may be prevented.

Occupational diseases are health conditions (e.g., cancer, musculoskeletal disorders, respiratory diseases, etc.) that are caused by exposure to hazardous substances or environments in the workplace or as part of work activities. Recognizing and preventing occupational disease presents unique challenges, and requires the elimination or reduction of hazardous exposures, and the control of risks.

The resources provided in [Prevent Occupational Disease](https://www.preventoccdisease.ca/), relate to the science and mechanics of prevention; common hazards and their identification, exposure assessment and control; specific occupations and industries where the risk of developing occupational disease is higher; and internationally recognized occupational diseases including cancer, respiratory and skin diseases, and musculoskeletal disorders.

Prevent Occupational Disease will be continually updated with new content, and welcomes relevant submissions of free, accessible, non-commercial resources from around the world through its online form.

Visit the website: <https://www.preventoccdisease.ca/>.

Quotes

“The site provides a source for evidenced based information to address the hazards of occupational disease and drive prevention. We appreciate the contributions of our partners working together to address this system priority.”

- *Michael Roche, CEO, Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW)*

“Occupational disease is a serious and poorly understood issue in Canada. Incidence numbers are high. Impact is delayed, debilitating and frequently fatal. This website is a critical step in raising

awareness of health risks in the workplace and, most importantly, provides evidence-based knowledge that can drive prevention.”

- *Valerie Wolfe, Regional ED, Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) & Chair, Ontario Occupational Disease Action Plan Implementation Team*

“Occupational Disease is a critical issue in Ontario and its prevention will be a key pillar in the new Health & Safety Strategy being developed this spring. This website is an excellent step in raising awareness and fostering change by gathering trusted resources and tools in an accessible location to educate and assist workplaces in their prevention efforts. I congratulate OHCOW and their partner, CCOHS, for their leadership in pulling it together. “

- *Ron Kelusky, Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Prevention Officer, Ministry of Labour*

“We depend on collaborations with organizations such as OHCOW to produce quality resources that help create safe workplaces and protect workers in Canada.”

- *Anne Tennier, President and Chief Executive Officer at the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)*

Quick Facts

- The Prevent Occupational Disease initiative is an activity of the Ontario Occupational Disease Action Plan (ODAP) (begun in 2016 and building since) to move the prevention of occupational disease into priority focus.
- Occupational disease is common and results from exposure to chemical, biological and physical agents in the workplace. According to the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada (AWCBC), there were 592 occupational disease deaths in Canada versus 312 traumatic fatalities in 2016, and the rate is increasing in most provinces.
- Prevent Occupational Disease was developed by the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) and its Ontario Prevention System (and Occupational Disease Action Plan) partners, with website design and hosting support from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS).
- Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) is a pro-active team of health and safety professionals committed to promoting the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being for workers and their communities. OHCOW strives to accomplish this through the identification of workplace factors which are detrimental to the health and well-being of all workers, through the distribution of excellent occupational health, hygiene, and ergonomic information to increase knowledge among workers, employers and the general public; and through the provision of services designed to produce changes to improve workplaces and the health of workers.

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