

3. PREVENTION AND CONTROL

❖ General environmental conditions:

- ✓ Good ventilation, comfortable temperature and adequate illumination
- ✓ Floors constructed of non-slip material and to be kept dry with adequate drainage

❖ Ergonomics

- ✓ Proper manual handling /correct and safe lifting techniques

❖ Noise control

- ✓ Enclose noisy machines
- ✓ Regular maintenance of machines
- ✓ Provision of hearing protectors

❖ Wear appropriate personal protective equipment e.g. gloves for wet work, safety shoes with non skid soles

❖ Maintain personal hygiene

❖ Keeping hands dry after wet work and use skin moisturizers

❖ Adequate washing and sanitary facilities

❖ Provision of adequate and appropriate safety signs e.g. NO SMOKING

❖ Proper guarding of machines to prevent cuts, lacerations and crush injuries

❖ Learn first aid and ensure first aid boxes are available

❖ Water proof dressings should be applied to any wounds during working hours and replaced by porous dressing at home

❖ Fire Prevention

- ✓ Adequate fire extinguishers and alarms

- ✓ Training in fire procedures

- ✓ Designated emergency assembly points

❖ Good housekeeping

❖ Undergo health surveillance programme and appropriate vaccinations



**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**

WORKING IN THE FOOD AND CATERING INDUSTRY



*FACTS ON THE HEALTH
AND SAFETY RISKS*

1. INTRODUCTION

❖ Category of workers who are included in the food and catering industries includes those who are working in the following places:

- Catering
- Bakeries
- Food Canning
- Food Processing
- Hotel Industry

2. HEALTH AND SAFETY HAZARDS

❖ Physical Hazards

- Noise - loud noise can cause hearing loss which is permanent and has no cure. Common in food processing, bottling and canning industries
- Heat stress and heat exhaustion from prolonged exposure to heat and humidity (e.g. in kitchen)
- Cold stress when working in walk-in refrigerators or freezers when handling frozen food
- Dust
 - Work related asthma affects workers inhaling dusts which are respiratory sensitizers eg. dust from grains, flour, spices, fish protein

- Can initially present as allergic rhinitis (runny or stuffy nose, frequent sneezing)

❖ Biological hazards

- Foods may be contaminated with bacteria e.g. raw chicken meat contaminated with Salmonella

❖ Chemical Hazards

- Accumulation of unburnt fuel vapours and gases of combustion products, including carbon monoxide, which may cause intoxication or asphyxia
- Skin diseases due to chemical irritants and/or allergens
 - Caused by contact with soaps, detergents, cleaning products, herbs, fish, sea foods, meat and poultry
 - Workers who are in contact with water very frequently may develop fungal skin rashes of hands
 - Workers involved with greasy processes such as frying may develop acne

❖ Ergonomic Hazards

- Upper limb disorders and back problems e.g. strains, sprains, pain, numbness, swelling and tingling in the hands and wrists
- Can be caused by lifting heavy loads, repetitive manual tasks, working in awkward

positions or prolonged standing e.g. lifting heavy flour sacks

❖ Psychosocial Hazards

- Stress and fatigue due to paced work
- Harassment e.g. dissatisfied clients

❖ Safety Hazards

- Fire hazard
 - Cooking oils, bottled gas.
- Cuts and lacerations
 - From cutting knives, food mincer, broken glassware
- Injuries due to slips, trips and falls e.g. wet floor, poor housekeeping
- Burns from ovens, steam, cooked or baked foods and hot drinks
- Heavy, blunt objects such as weights and trays may cause crush injuries if dropped on the worker's foot
- Electrical shocks e.g. from inadequate insulation or earthing of machineries