

## Guidance on hazards and control measures to consider when undertaking a pregnancy risk assessment

Existing workplace hazards	Nature of risk in pregnancy	Control measures to consider
<b>Physical</b>		
Exposure to radiation	Significant exposure to ionising radiation may be harmful to the foetus.	Ensure compliance with <i>Ionising Radiation Regulations</i> . Refer to a health and safety professional.
Loud noise	Prolonged loud noise can increase the blood pressure and reduce growth of the baby.	Refer to a health and safety professional if exposed to noise which makes conversation difficult at a distance of 2 metres.
Work on slippery or wet surfaces	The likelihood of falling may be higher especially in later pregnancy when the body shape changes. Falling carries a risk to mother and baby.	Implement usual good practices to minimise slipping risks (e.g. clear signage, regular wiping of wet areas).
Prolonged sitting or standing	Prolonged sitting increases the risk of back pain. Prolonged standing (>3 hrs at a time) increases the risk of back pain, tiredness and varicose veins.	Consider additional breaks, regular short walks, provision of a stool or chair, if appropriate, consider reducing time standing to a minimum.

Vibrating equipment	<p>Whole body vibration increases the risk of back pain.</p> <p>High levels of whole body vibration and being bumped about can be potentially hazardous for the baby.</p> <p>Use of tools which cause hand arm vibration increases the risk of carpal tunnel, the risk of which is also increased by pregnancy.</p>	Refer to a health and safety professional if this is an issue. Consider removal of tasks from job role.
Repeated bending or stretching	This may increase the risk of back pain, especially in later pregnancy and also of fatigue.	Consider additional breaks.
Lifting and carrying	Hormonal changes during and immediately after pregnancy increase susceptibility to ligament and associated injuries. The risk of back pain is increased in pregnancy due to softening of the ligaments. This can occur from the beginning of pregnancy and throughout its duration. In later pregnancy, the risks are increased due to the changed posture.	Consider additional breaks. Review tasks; reduce lifting and carrying as far as possible.
<b>Biological</b>		
Work with micro-organisms or infectious materials	Some diseases such as chicken pox, German measles, or tuberculosis pose particular risks for pregnant women, although these are not likely to be a risk except for those working in a	Seek occupational health advice if you are concerned about potential exposure. Where possible, avoid potential contact with infectious diseases. Restrict exposure if the employee is known

	healthcare/childcare. environments. Specific control measures may be needed for those working with known microbiological hazards, e.g. blood-borne viruses (Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV).	not to be immune to rubella (German measles), VZV (chicken pox) or TB.  Provision of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) may be necessary.
<b>Chemical</b>		
Work with chemicals or lead	Some chemicals are specifically toxic to the developing foetus. Pregnant women are forbidden by law from work involving lead (e.g. some piping or lead flashings).	For low risk chemicals, such as disinfectants regularly used by cleaners, the risk is relatively low and usual control measures such as wearing gloves will be adequate. If more toxic substances are involved, consult the COSHH data sheet. If further guidance is required, consider seeking occupational health and safety guidance.
<b>Ergonomic</b>		
Working with display screen equipment (DSE)	No specific risk to health.  Effects on posture.	Compliance with DSE regulations.
Work in confined areas	Work in small areas may increase the risk of musculoskeletal problems, particularly in later pregnancy when the body shape changes.	Consider changing duties to avoid this, especially in late pregnancy, e.g. cleaners may struggle to clean toilets and shower cubicles as pregnancy progresses.

Use of protective clothing or uniform	Clothing may be hot or cumbersome and increase fatigue. Clothing may fit badly as shape changes in later pregnancy.	Consider whether clothing is comfortable and appropriate, and provide alternate styles, if necessary. Consider re-deployment if suitable clothing cannot be provided.
<b>Psychosocial</b>		
Exposure to strong or unpleasant smells	This may increase nausea, especially in early pregnancy.	Consider relocation from the area in early pregnancy if this is a particular issue. Consider breaks to be taken away from the area.
Working alone for long periods	Possible increase in risk of ill health requiring assistance.	Review usual lone working policies, consider additional means for raising assistance if needed, etc.
Shift work or night work	Fatigue may be an issue.	Review working hours if this causes a significant problem. May require flexibility on shift patterns (e.g. no mornings if struggling with morning sickness).
Overtime	Fatigue may be an issue and growth of the baby may be reduced if the mother is working long hours or becomes very tired.	Working hours should be limited as far as possible to a standard working week of approx 40 hrs. Consider whether work demands are excessive.
Work in hot conditions	Fatigue may be an issue, also risk of increased blood pressure. This may be an issue even in ordinary	Consider extra breaks in a cooler area if appropriate, and ensure drinking water is available. Consider

	offices in particularly hot weather.	alternate duties if severe.
Work without good access to toilet and rest facilities	More frequent toilet breaks may be required during pregnancy. Fatigue may also be an issue.	Consider redeployment if adequate toilet facilities are not available, and consider whether a rest area is required.
Violence and aggression	Direct trauma or physical shocks to the abdomen during pregnancy may increase the risk of haemorrhage and miscarriage.	Perform a risk assessment identifying the likelihood of exposure to workplace violence and aggression.  Consider alternative work if unavoidable risk is identified.