



## Workplace Screening Tool for Pregnant Workers

### Introduction

Workplace conditions can present unique risks to pregnant workers. Exposures to *certain* chemical, biological, physical or ergonomic risk factors may be hazardous to the pregnant worker and her fetus.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide managers and supervisors with a screening tool to determine whether such hazards exist in their work areas, and to provide information to workers about the hazards their work may present. If such hazards exist, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) should be contacted to conduct a more detailed assessment.

The physical presence of the agent does not necessarily mean that the worker or her fetus is in danger. Like any health effects, the likelihood of developing reproductive or teratogenic (birth defect) effects depends on the route of exposure (inhalation, injection, skin absorption, etc.), the frequency and intensity (concentration) of exposure and the controls used to limit exposure. Controls include engineering controls (like fume hoods), administrative controls, work practices and personal protective equipment (PPE). The detailed assessment will take all these factors into account.

In some cases, the worker's physician may have already prescribed work modifications for the worker for the remainder of the pregnancy. In these circumstances, the supervisor should notify Health and Well-Being (416-978-2149) and the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (416-978-4467).

### Regulatory Requirements

Under the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, the employer (University of Toronto) and the supervisor are responsible for taking "*every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker*", and are also required to comply with the chemical exposure limits found in Ontario Regulation 833 "Control of Exposure to Biological or Chemical Agents".

### Workplace Assessment Process

1. The supervisor completes the Workplace Screening Tool for Reproductive Hazards in consultation with the pregnant worker.
2. If none of the risk hazards on the Screening Tool exist in the work performed by the pregnant worker, the Assessment ends.
3. If any of the risk hazards on the Screening Tool exist, the supervisor contacts EHS to conduct a more detailed assessment.



4. EHS may also be contacted if the supervisor or pregnant worker has any questions regarding the completion of the Screening Tool or have concerns that are listed in the Screening Tool.
5. Supervisor maintains a copy of the Screening Tool on file.



## Screening Tool for Reproductive Hazards – Chemical, Biological, Physical and Ergonomic Risk Factors

### Faculty/Department Information

<b>Faculty/Department</b>		<b>Department Chair</b>	
<b>Supervisor</b>		<b>Building / Room</b>	
<b>Worker's Name</b>			
<b>Worker Job Title</b>		<b>Date</b>	

### Chemical, Biological and Physical Hazards

Chemical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chemotherapeutics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Anesthetic gases</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Metals (e.g. Lead, Mercury)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Organic Solvents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pesticides</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chemicals for which there is little or no toxicological information, like most lab intermediates and many lab reagents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review MSDS sheets – check box if any MSDS have health effects statements regarding reproductive or teratogenic hazards</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chemical exposures which require the use of respiratory protection</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other: (please specify)</li> </ul>
Biological	<p>If you work in a CL2 or CL3 lab, please contact the EHS Biosafety Officer at <a href="mailto:ehs.office@utoronto.ca">ehs.office@utoronto.ca</a>. Examples of biological materials of particular concern include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rubella</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> CMV</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parvovirus</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> AIDS/HIV</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Toxoplasmosis</li> </ul>



Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Noise</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Vibration</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Hot Environments</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Cold Environments</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Ionizing Radiation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Non-ionizing Radiation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Confined or Restricted Spaces</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Working at Heights</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Other:(please specify)</li></ul>
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**Conclusion**

- None of the Hazards identified above exist.
- At least one of the Hazards identified above exist. Contact EHS for a more detailed assessment (416-978-4467).

Go to the next page and complete the Screening for Ergonomic Risk Factors.



**Screening Tool for Reproductive Hazards – Chemical, Biological, Physical and Ergonomic Risk Factors (cont'd)**

**Ergonomic Hazards**

	Risk	Corrective Actions
Office Ergonomics	<input type="checkbox"/> Prolonged sitting <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">(please specify)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Chair has lumbar support <input type="checkbox"/> Worker knows how to adjust chair for comfort <input type="checkbox"/> Provide footstool to elevate feet (reduces swelling in the feet and legs) <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure work station has been set up per recommended practices <a href="http://www.ehs.utoronto.ca/services/Ergonomics.htm">http://www.ehs.utoronto.ca/services/Ergonomics.htm</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Worker encouraged to take breaks/change position (stand, walk) as needed
Manual Materials Handling	<input type="checkbox"/> Prolonged standing <input type="checkbox"/> Lifting more than 10 kg <input type="checkbox"/> Repetitive bending <input type="checkbox"/> Repetitive climbing of ladders or stairs <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">(please specify)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide chair and footstool for intermittent sitting <input type="checkbox"/> Worker encouraged to take breaks/change position (sit, walk) as needed <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce weight carried <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce frequency of lifting <input type="checkbox"/> Provide manual materials handling aids (e.g. cart) <input type="checkbox"/> Assign additional workers to assist in lifting <input type="checkbox"/> Workers instructed on properly lifting techniques <input type="checkbox"/> Task re-assigned to others <input type="checkbox"/> Task re-designed to reduce lifting, bending and climbing of ladders or stairs

**Conclusion**

- None of the Hazards identified above exist.
- At least one of the Hazards identified above exist in the work area. Corrective actions have been implemented to control the Hazards.



- At least one of the Hazards identified above exist. However, corrective actions do not entirely address the Hazard. Contact EHS for a more detailed assessment (416-978-4467).

**Signatures**

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Worker's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Worker's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_