

SMOHIT Body Maintenance
Toolbox Talks for the Sheet Metal Industry

Raynaud's Phenomenon

- Raynaud's phenomenon (RP) is a condition resulting in a particular series of discolorations of the fingers and/or the toes after exposure to changes in temperature, trauma (such as excessive vibration) or if you experience severe stress.
- With RP, skin discoloration occurs because an abnormal spasm of the blood vessels causes a diminished blood supply to the local tissues.
 - Initially, the digit(s) involved turn white because of the diminished blood supply.
 - The digit(s) then turn blue because of prolonged lack of oxygen.
 - Finally, the blood vessels reopen, causing a local "flushing" phenomenon, which turns the digit(s) red.
- People can have RP alone (which is referred to as Raynaud's disease or primary Raynaud's phenomenon) or with other rheumatic diseases (which is referred to as secondary Raynaud's phenomenon).
 - RP has been seen with a number of other conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and trauma (from frostbite or vibrating tools).
- The primary symptom of RP is skin discoloration upon exposure to cold, vibration or stress; and a tingling in the fingers when the color returns.
- Management of RP involves protecting the fingers and the toes from cold, trauma and infection.
- Medications that dilate the blood vessels can help control RP.
- Smoking can worsen RP by constricting blood-vessels, which makes it more difficult for oxygen to reach the extremities.

Notes:

Instructor Tips

- **Ask workers to share any experiences they may have had, or heard of regarding Raynaud's phenomenon.**
- **Explain that the causes of primary and secondary RP are unknown, however, both abnormal nerve control of the blood-vessel diameter and nerve sensitivity to cold exposure and trauma have been suspected as contributing factors.**
- **Explain that the nose and ears can also be affected by RP.**

Jobsite: _____
Supervisor: _____

Date: _____
G.C. _____

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Work-Related Ailments (04)