USACHPPM
Readiness thru Health

65-003-0403

Just the Facts...

Evaluation for Occupational Hearing Loss

1) Review employee questionnaire about work and non-work noise exposure.
2) Interview employee and document responses regarding exposures and use of hearing protection.
3) Check hearing protectors for deterioration and fit.
4) Observe employee demonstrate use of hearing protection.

STS
Old DOD criteria: ≥ 15 dB change from baseline at 1K, 2K, 3K or 4K; or ≥ 10 dB avg at 2K, 3K, 4K in either ear
Jan 2004 criteria: ≥ 10 dB average change from baseline at 2K, 3K, 4K in either ear

Annual Hearing Test

STS Present?

No:
1) Counsel employee about hearing protection at work, home and play.
2) Follow up in one year.

Yes:
1) Counsel employee about protecting hearing at work and in other activities.
2) Watch employee demonstrate use of hearing protection. Consider alternative protective devices.
3) Notify supervisor of STS and ask for close attention of use of hearing protection.
4) Schedule repeat test, noise-free at least 14 hours

Note: Negative STS (improved hearing) still needs follow-up and usually represents inaccurate baseline. Re-set baseline if single repeat confirms.

Repeat Hearing Test

STS Present?

No:
1) Counsel employee about hearing protection at work, home and play.
2) Consider alternative protective devices.
3) Follow up in one year.

Yes:

Repeat Hearing Test Again (immediately)

STS Present?

No:
1) Inform employee and supervisor in writing (chart copy.)
2) Re-set baseline.
3) If employee files claim, provide clinical and exposure documentation to OWCP.
4) Recommend appropriate follow-up if suspected pathology.

Yes:
1) OM doc reviews employee exposure, history and audiometric data and examines employee to R/O medical causes of hearing loss
2) OM doc determines need for Audiology and/or ENT referral
3) Provides relevant clinical and exposure data for referral doctor; requests specific audiologic opinion re: relation of loss to current job.
4) OM doc reviews reports from referral doctors; seeks further evaluation if indicated; determines whether hearing loss is occupational

Is hearing loss due to noise exposure with current employer?

No

Yes:
1) Inform employee and supervisor in writing (chart copy) and of right to file CA-2 (CA-1 if acoustic trauma.)
2) Ensure employee signs DD 2216.
3) Re-set baseline.
4) Consider alternative protective devices.
5) Reinforce and document counseling.
6) Follow-up in one year.
7) If hearing loss meets OSHA recordable level, record on OSHA log using CA-2 as per AR 385-40

Recordable Shift
Old OSHA criteria: ≥ 25 dB average change from baseline at 2K, 3K, 4K in either ear
Jan 2004 criteria: ≥ 10 dB average change from baseline at 2K, 3K, 4K if overall hearing loss is at least 25 dB loss from zero at same frequencies in the same ear

Occupational and Environmental Medicine
U.S. Army Center for Health and Preventive Medicine
5158 Blackhawk Rd, Aberdeen Proving Ground 21010-5403
410-436-1011 or DSN 584-1011