

HANFORD ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE EVALUATION CHECKLIST: BERYLLIUM PROGRAMS

1. **Incidence of Sensitivity**
 - 1-5% of Workers with Beryllium Exposure show positive sensitivity based on results of the Be-LPT
 - Relationship between Dose and Response is strong, however incidental exposures with positive sensitivity have been documented
 - Some individuals seem to have a hypersensitivity to Beryllium
2. **Sensitivity Vs. Chronic Beryllium Disease**
 - The Be-LPT tests for immune system sensitivity to Beryllium. It DOES NOT diagnose Chronic Beryllium Disease
 - A person with a confirmed positive sensitivity to Beryllium has a high probability of contracting Chronic Beryllium Disease at a future date.
3. **Symptoms of CBD**
 - CBD is a chronic, irreversible lung disease
 - CBD typically takes many years to develop
 - CBD can be misdiagnosed as other pulmonary conditions, typically sarcoidosis
 - Symptomatic CBD may take three courses: it may go into remission with treatment; it may continue with a low level of impairment to pulmonary function over time; more rarely it may continue to develop into a chronic debilitating disease.
 - Symptoms of late stage, chronic Beryllium Disease include: shortness of breath, weight loss, fatigue, abnormal PFT
4. **Meaning of Test Results**
 - Positive test results indicate a personal sensitivity to Beryllium
 - The test can have both false positives and false negatives
 - All positives will be repeated for confirmation, after two positives the Be-LPT is no longer necessary
 - Because sensitization may take months to years to show up, a negative test today does not mean that you might not test positive at some time in the future
 - DOE-HQ is reviewing the effect a positive test could have on any recommendation for future or continuing work with Beryllium
 - A positive test may be interpreted as increased risk by insurance companies
5. **Procedure for Be-LPT testing**
 - This blood test is VOLUNTARY, you have to choose if you want it or not
 - 5 vials of blood are drawn for this test (by comparison, 2 vials for Hazwoper)
 - Samples are sent to a laboratory specializing in this analysis. It takes about 10 days for the results to return.