CSC
Hanford Occupational Health Services

# *Exposure Assessment Informational Guide*

**If you have a confirmed or potential acute worksite exposure, your employer may require you to be seen at CSC Hanford Occupational Health Services (CSC HOHS). This is what you can expect during your CSC HOHS visit. Please read and sign to acknowledge your receipt of this information. Thank you.**

CSC HOHS has a few acute exposure protocols that may be different based on the following factors: the potential health effects of the suspected toxicant and whether or not the potential toxicant is known or unknown. You will be asked to provide a statement describing the exposure event and any related symptoms and will be seen by a physician or physician assistant. It is very important that you provide as much information as possible about the circumstances of the incident. This will allow the medical assessment to be of greatest benefit to you. In most exposure cases, laboratory samples (blood and/or urinalysis) will be collected. The physician or physician assistant should explain to you what testing is being ordered, why it is being ordered and what you can expect to learn from the results. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask while at CSC HOHS.

***Following An Exposure, Testing May Be Performed for Different Purposes***

- When possible, a lab test may be used to measure the level of uptake of a substance in your system. This may involve blood tests, urine tests, or both. Each target substance has a different "half-life" or the amount of time it takes to be removed from your body. Some of these are very short periods so it is generally better to get the lab testing as soon as possible after an exposure. In some cases, the substance could be gone in a short period of time. In some cases there may not be a need for lab tests.
- When appropriate, the testing performed is to measure the amount of a substance that was taken up or absorbed into your body. It may or may not correlate with specific health effects. Also, if there is no potential for substance uptake and the effects are in the form of an irritation or an injury to body tissues, such as the lungs or skin, the lab tests may not be indicated but the potential effects are evaluated by history and exam. Therefore, the tests are important if appropriate but we also need to summarize your medical symptoms and to examine you, documenting any abnormalities. Other testing, such as an x-ray or pulmonary function tests may also be necessary to help define subtle health effects that may not be readily evident. In some cases, there may be no immediate effects, but effects may be found later. Therefore, it may also be important to "follow" you over time, including periodic lab testing, to look for possible chronic or long-term effects. This latter part is usually built into your routine medical surveillance program if you typically work regularly with a specific substance. In summary, there are three important elements of your evaluation 1. History and exam at the time of the incident, 2. Appropriate lab tests at the time of the incident or as soon as possible, if appropriate, and 3. Appropriate follow-up exams and testing over time after the incident.

***Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Are Available***

The time following an exposure incident can be a difficult time for both you and your family. CSC HOHS has licensed counselors available to help you deal with the increased stress if needed. You can ask the patient registration specialist to assist you with an appointment, or call 376-4418 directly to schedule a confidential appointment.

***Patient Comment and Concern Line***

If at any time, you feel your questions were not adequately addressed, or you think of additional questions, please call the CSC HOHS Patient Comment Line at 376-6565 to speak with our Patient Advocate. If no one answers, please leave a message and your number and your call will be returned.

***Further Information on Potential Exposure***

Your employer may have further information on the exposure incident. Please contact your employer if you have questions regarding the specific exposure levels and what may have caused the incident.