

# Health and safety at work for pregnant women and new mothers: *Risk assessment checklist*

<b>MOVEMENTS AND POSTURES</b>	
Is it necessary to stand for long periods without a break?	
Is it necessary to sit for long periods without a break?	
Is there enough space for movement as pregnancy progresses?	
Does the equipment or workspace need to be adjusted to fit the worker?	
Is awkward twisting or stretching involved in the work ?	
Does the work involve a lot of climbing up and down steps or ladders?	
Does the work involve carrying items up or down steps of ladders?	
<b>MANUAL HANDLING</b>	
Is there strenuous lifting involved?	
Is there lifting of objects which are difficult or awkward to hold?	
Is there awkward lifting involved (eg twisting, stooping or stretching)?	
Is there repetitive work or movement?	
<b>SHOCKS, JOLTS AND VIBRATIONS</b>	
Are there any tasks involving whole body vibration, eg fork lift trucks?	
Is there any danger from falling objects?	
Is there any driving or riding in off-road vehicles?	
<b>NOISE</b>	
Are pregnant or breastfeeding women subject to noise levels exceeding the <i>Noise at Work Regulations 1989</i> , HSE?	
<b>IONISING AND NON-IONISING RADIATION</b>	
Check the requirements in <i>Working safely with ionising radiation: Guidelines for expectant and breastfeeding mothers 2001</i> , HSE.	
<b>BIOLOGICAL/INFECTIONS</b>	
Are there dangers from bacteria and viruses eg raw meat, fish, other foodstuffs, unpasteurised milk and dairy products, dirty toilets, infested storage?	
Is there any danger from hepatitis B, HIV (the AIDS virus), herpes, TB, syphilis, chickenpox, typhoid, rubella, toxoplasma, any other animal viruses?	
<b>CHEMICAL</b>	
Are there any chemicals involved in the work which are known to be a risk? Check the requirements in <i>Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations, 2002</i> .	
Does the work involve handling any chemical products? (including spillage, residues, contaminated materials, surfaces or equipment)	
Are there any fumes (eg unloading dry cleaning machines)?	



Are there any substances in use which could have adverse effects on the unborn child? (mercury and mercury derivatives, antimitotic drugs, some pesticides, carbon monoxide, solvents)	
Is there any exposure to lead or lead derivatives? The exposure of pregnant and breastfeeding women to lead is specifically prohibited under Article 6 of the European Directive (92/85/EEC)	
<b>WORKING CONDITIONS</b>	
Is there somewhere quiet for pregnant workers to rest?	
Are they protected from exposure to tobacco smoke in the workplace and the rest area?	
Are they given easy access to toilets with associated hygiene facilities?	
Are they allowed more frequent breaks than other workers if needed?	
Is there a clean, private area for breastfeeding workers to express breastmilk?	
Is there somewhere safe for them to store expressed milk?	
Is the job one which is perceived to have a high risk of violence (eg security work, single staffing in a petrol station)?	
Is help and support easy to access if working alone or if threatened or abused by customers (eg in small shops or isolated work areas)?	
<b>WORKING HOURS</b>	
Is the woman expected to work long hours/overtime?	
Does she have some flexibility or choice over her working hours?	
Does the work involve very early starts or finishes?	
Does the work involve night work?	
<b>OCCUPATIONAL STRESS</b>	
Are there tasks which are known to be particularly stressful, for example, dealing with customers or complaints and handling cash and valuables, especially at night?	
Has the individual risk assessment taken into account any concerns the woman has about her own pregnancy?	
Is the woman aware of what to do if she feels she is being bullied or victimised?	
<b>EXTREMES OF COLD AND HEAT</b>	
Does the work involve exposure to temperatures which are uncomfortably cold or hot?	
When the weather is very hot is it possible for priority to be given to a pregnant woman to have extra rest and early finish times?	
Are there arrangements for frequent breaks and access to hot/cold drinks?	
<b>WORK EQUIPMENT AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT</b>	
Is essential protective clothing provided in suitable sizes?	
Are any obligatory uniforms provided in maternity sizes?	
Are the materials comfortable for pregnant workers to wear?	

This checklist draws from 'New and expectant mothers at work: A guide for employers' HSE 2002. 'Pregnancy risk assessment checklist,' 2005, USDAW. Healthy Beginnings: Guidance on Safe Maternity at Work quoted in 'Delivering for Pregnant Women, 2005, USDAW.'



**Sheffield Occupational  
Health Advisory Service**

3rd Floor, Queen's Building, 55 Queen Street, Sheffield S1 2DX  
Telephone: 0114 249 5903 • [www.sohas.co.uk](http://www.sohas.co.uk)