

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH CARE NURSING

## What is Occupational Health?

WHO defined Occupational Health as: ‘**the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations**’

## Occupational Health Nursing

The specialty practice that focuses on the promotion, prevention, and restoration of health within the context of a safe and healthy environment.

(American Association of Occupational Health Nurses, 2004)

## Aim of occupational health nursing

1. To promote health at work
2. To protect the health of the worker
3. Care for work-related injuries and illness
4. Committed to client’s wellness which involves
  - health promotion
  - disease and injury prevention
  - health education
  - care and safety management

## The Scope of OHN practice

1. Prevention of occupational injuries
2. Prevention of occupational illness
3. Reducing work place hazards
4. Promotion of worker’s health
5. Restoration of worker’s health (maintenance of worker’s health)

## **Factors determining OHN's scope of practice**

1. The no. of workforce
2. Types of products and processes
3. Chemicals used
4. Machinery used
5. Management philosophy

## **12 main functions specific to occupational health nursing**

1. health supervision of workers
2. health surveillance of the work environment
3. accident prevention
4. prevention of occupational ill health
5. treatment of illness and injury at work
6. first aid course
7. promotion of health and prevention of ill health
8. giving counselling
9. rehabilitation and resettlement into work; records and reports
10. Communication and co-operation (internally and externally)
11. administration of the health unit
12. research (including surveys)

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSE**

1. Prevention of occupational injury and disease
2. Promotion of health and work ability
3. Improving environmental health management

## **Work-Related Disease or Injury**

- Occupational lung disease
- Musculoskeletal injuries
- Occupational cancers
- Trauma
- CVDs
- Reproductive disorders
- Neurotoxic disorders
- Noise-induced hearing loss
- Dermatological conditions
- Psychological disorders

## **Prevention of Occupational Diseases**

### **primary prevention**

In the area of primary prevention, the occupational health nurse is involved in both health promotion and disease prevention

Disease prevention begins with recognition of a health risk, a disease, or an environmental hazard and is followed by measures to protect as many people as possible from harmful consequences of that risk.

### **Secondary Prevention**

Secondary prevention strategies are aimed at early diagnosis, early treatment interventions, and attempts to limit disability.

### **Tertiary Prevention**

On a tertiary level, the occupational health nurse plays a key role in the rehabilitation and restoration of the worker to an optimal level of functioning.

### **Quiz**

- 1- Define Occupational Health and Occupational Health Nursing
- 2- Enumerate the aims of OHN
- 3- What are the main functions specific to occupational health nursing
- 4- Write about the roles and responsibilities of occupational health nurses
- 5- Write about the Prevention of Occupational Diseases