

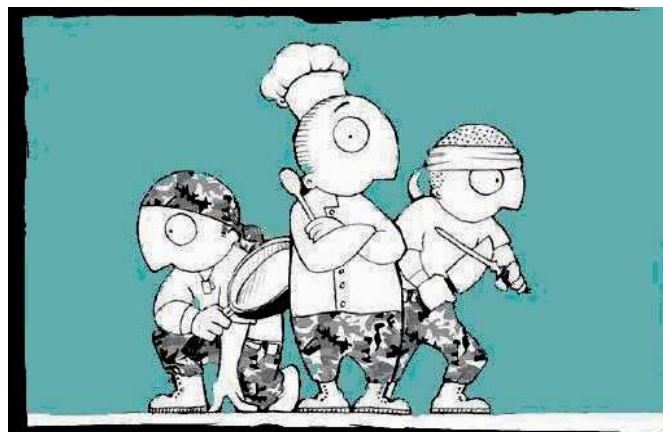
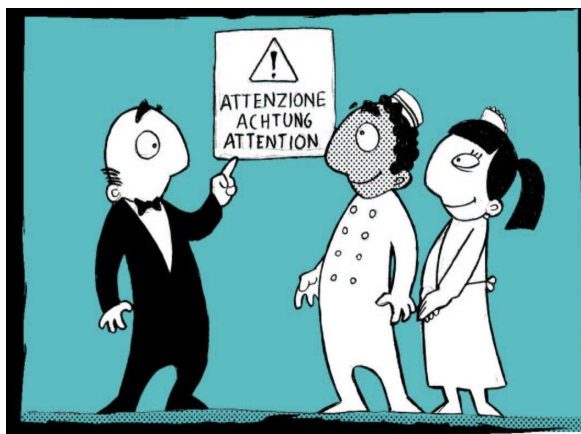
PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS FOR GOOD HEALTH AND ZERO ACCIDENTS WHILST WORKING IN HOTELS, RESTAURANTS OR PIZZERIAS



**A handbook for foreign workers
Edited by EBT Province of Venice**

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This document has been written in English, French and other languages so that the text can be read with ease by many foreign workers too; the Italian version is designed to be listened to with text-to-speech on smart phones and tablets (with good quality, using particular softwares).

This handbook is the result of a joint effort; many more contributed in addition to professionals of the Bilateral Agency of Tourism of the Province of Venice (EBT Venice): Roberto Montagnani, occupational physician, Domenico Simone, Director of EBT Venice, Marco Ghezzi, architect, specialist in occupational safety;

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THE LAW



What you're reading here is a short guide which outlines main issues of prevention in the hotels, restaurants and pizzerias.

This material is not intended to replace the specific training for health and safety at work that every company must give its employees in accordance with the current legislation.

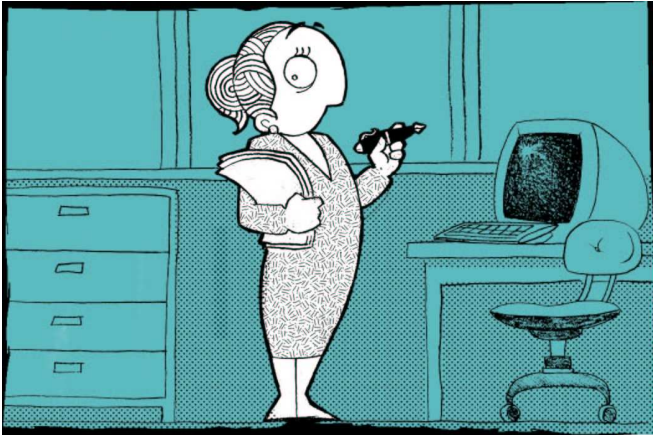
It aims instead to integrate and allow further thought. We hereby present and discuss issues that we believe are important, but people who are responsible for the training for occupational risks in your company have to add what's needed so that your health and safety at work are always guaranteed.

According to the Italian Constitution health and safety at work is totally safeguarded and it is fundamental; so if you see something that is likely to endanger you or those around you, even if in , you can contact the person in charge of safety or the Workers ' Representative for safety (RLS, -in our Country at least one RLS should be nominated or appointed in each company).

So it will be possible to make the necessary checks and to carry out the needed changes where appropriate. If you can't contact the person in charge of safety or the RLS, then you should talk to your employer: he is the person legally bound to ensure a safe and healthy work environment.

THE LEADERS OF SAFETY IN THE TOURIST INDUSTRY

The most important person, as we said, is definitely the employer, because he/she is the first responsible for prevention in all companies/institutions.



The number and the role of the other "protagonists" changes according to the size of the company and the type of work done.

The Prevention and Protection Service collaborates with the employer in carrying out the risks assessment and the related document processing; it organises the proper safety measures to be adopted in order to eliminate or reduce the occupational risks; it ensures

both the general and specific training of workers . When it is put in place, this Service is involved in all matters relating to safety at work.

Sometimes there isn't any Prevention and Protection Service, because the law gives employers the chance to carry out this duty directly themselves.

In these cases the direct safety management by the employer is allowed:

1. Artisans and industrial companies up to 30 employees
2. Farms and livestock companies up to 10 employees
3. Fishery Companies up to 20 employees
4. All other companies up to 200 employees.

The Workers ' Representative for safety (RLS) plays an important role for the staff as 'spokesperson' for prevention. He is elected or appointed by the employees (1 up to 200 employees, 3 if the employees are from 201 up to 1000).

With the help of his/ her colleagues, he/ she is working for the protection of health and safety at work.

In companies where workers have not elected a RLS, the Workers' Representative is nominated by the Trade Unions on a territorial basis or according to categories (these are the Territorial Workers ' Representative for Safety ,RLST, who carry out the function of RLS for all companies of a specific territory or type of industry).

In every company first aid operators must be appointed; they receive at the expense of the employer a specific theoretical/practical training by courses held by physicians. Workers selected to carry out the task of first aid attendants may not refuse the appointment if not for justified reasons.

Attendants for non medical emergencies and fire prevention must also be appointed in all workplaces; the training of these employees depends on the level of fire risk (low-middle-high) and it is given with courses held by the Provincial Command of Fire Fighters or by specialised personnel; in this case also the selected employees should not refuse the appointment if not for justified reasons.

The fire emergency workers and first aid personnel are in close contact with the employer, who has responsibility for the emergency team and the Prevention and Protection Service.

First aid attendants are coordinated by the occupational physician; if the occupational physician has not been appointed, they rely on the advice of qualified medical personnel of the emergency public health services (118).

The "competent doctor" (occupational physician) is appointed by the employer when there is a legal obligation of "health surveillance"¹ [in the tourism sector, for example, in the presence of workers continuously engaged at video display units (VDU), if there is night work, in the case of a continuous activity of manual lifting of loads, etc.].

The competent doctor also makes a periodical report about results for all the employees submitted to the health examinations and gives them a copy of their medical reports.

The Unique Text on safety and health states that this competent doctor must collaborate with the employer for the risks assessment (for the prevention of diseases caused by work stress, ergonomics, biohazard etc.)

The supervisors have essentially a function of control, they must verify if staff works in full compliance with the safety rules imposed by the law and by the company's management.

The supervisors too receive a specific course on health and safety organised by the employer. The role of the supervisor has its specific utility in major companies where there are multiple departments and many offices. Where it is not so, it is a duty of the Prevention and Protection service or of the employer himself to ensure an effective monitoring of the compliance with the rules on health and safety at work.

The involvement of employees is essential to achieve a real progress in prevention. Workers have the right to understand what are their obligations regarding health and safety and must be able to respect them; therefore they must have a clear awareness of the risks and the necessary steps to eliminate or at least minimize them.

Training is a critical issue, but it is at the same time important that, soon after the workers have completed their training courses, they are also regularly trained in the field on how to follow the safety rules their company has put in place.

¹The expression "health surveillance at workplace" means the periodic monitoring of workers' health by a specialist in occupational medicine (see below).

AT THE HOTEL

INJURIES DUE TO SLIPPING, STUMBLING, FALLING

This type of injury is the most common in this sector; luckily only minor injuries (sprains, minor bruises) are often caused, but sometimes there are more serious consequences, both to workers and guests, such as fractures or head traumas.



We must then strive to avoid these accidents.

At work you should always wear proper shoes, the safety footwear with non-slip sole that your company has provided.

When going up or down stairs it is always safe to have at least one hand free, ready to hold the handrail.

We must always keep floors dry and clean during all the time of our work. We all must pay attention to this aspect and keep all passages free, leaving no carts or other bulky objects in the way.

When we work above our shoulders, we need to use a ladder with a wide base or a scaffold verified as safe by those in charge of safety, to prevent falling.

Electrical cables or extension cords, even placed temporarily (vacuum cleaner, computers etc.) must never be in passageways.

CONTACT WITH THE SKIN OR EYES OR INHALATION OF HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS

Hazardous chemicals can be present among the ingredients of liquids for cleaning, descaling, concentrated detergents for plates, pans and glasses, cleaning products, disinfectants, products for cleaning ovens, products used in maintenance etc.



Workers who use these products are most frequently exposed to health risks due to contact with skin or eyes.

DANGEROUS PRODUCTS?

The first information about the health risks and the precautions to be taken in their use can be obtained from product labels, which must never be removed from packaging.

On the label you can see danger symbols that indicate whether the product is inflammable, toxic, corrosive, harmful, irritant, dangerous for the environment etc.

Due to the lack of space, the information is often incomplete.

However manufacturers or vendors must make available special sheets to the users of all dangerous products, called safety data sheets, in which the health risks and the preventive measures to be taken are explained in full.



Specific risks are always listed in the safety data sheets with synthetic sentences that explain the type of risk.

By law, labels and safety data sheets must be in Italian, if you have any doubts, ask the person who is in charge of safety.

Remember:

- to use gloves in activities involving the use of chemical products;
- to store the products in original

containers with their original label;

-do not mix chemicals that are incompatible with each other because they can develop toxic mixtures: eg. a descaling agent with bleach;

-pay attention to the transfer of products or substances from large-capacity containers to ones with a lesser capacity, to avoid splashing of liquids on eyes or other unprotected body parts;

-ventilate the environments (i.e. open windows) when using hazardous chemicals;

-store products and substances in dedicated areas or anyway in areas well separated from the workplace or passageways.

In addition, when emptying waste baskets, remember:

-to use gloves;

-to use tools to press waste into bags (scoop, etc).

AT THE RESTAURANT OR THE PIZZERIA

USE OF MACHINERY AND TOOLS



Accidents when working with machines or tools (e.g., kitchen work, maintenance) are another important aspect of prevention: these accidents can be serious.

In no circumstances remove protective devices from machinery and in case of failure notify promptly the safety officer or the employer.

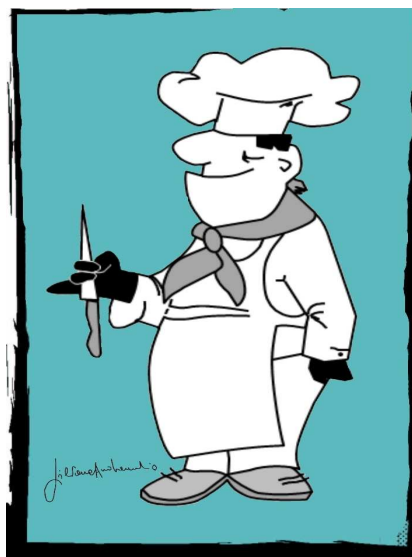
You should never intervene on machines if you are not authorized and you haven't got the approval of the employer or the person

in charge of safety.

Remember that electrical equipment must only be used when hands or gloves are dry, and away from liquids; this equipment must always be connected directly to power points and not to multiple sockets.

CUTS AND ABRASIONS

THE NEW DYNEEMA GLOVES, LIGHTWEIGHT AND VERY DURABLE, CAN PREVENT CUTS



Be careful when cleaning of knives and cutting tools.

Use always great caution in passing cutting tools and in handling knives; you have to employ gloves made with the new safety material Dyneema- (lightweight and comfortable special gloves) in cutting operations when the work to be done can be dangerous for your hands.

Boning operations must be done only after wearing proper protection for the body too, in order to avoid injuries to the chest or the abdomen.

BURNS

We must also use great caution in handling pans with boiling water, avoiding any contact with the metal parts.

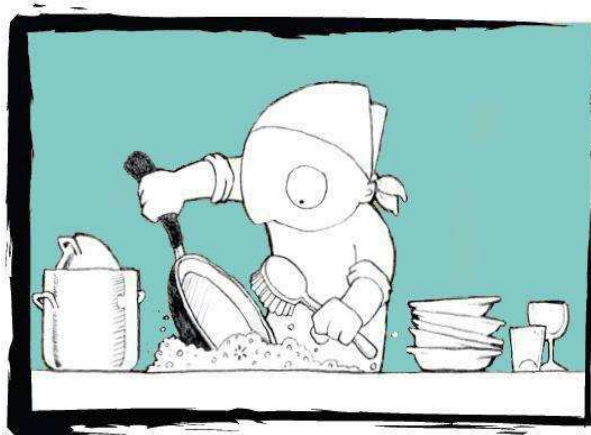
We have to move heavy cookware with the help of a colleague.

In frying it is necessary to pay attention to the placing and retrieving of foods to avoid splashing and dripping.

Use gloves and protective equipment for the body during operations in contact with the ovens or in using tools or types of cooking with steam.

We must be very careful in moving hot dishes or beverages, they can cause burns and then we must use appropriate trays if there is such a risk.

WORKING WITH WATER



Another critical aspect of the work in the kitchen is the need of hand protection to prevent the maceration effect, that is when we have a prolonged contact of our hands with water as in washing plates, cutlery, crockery etc.

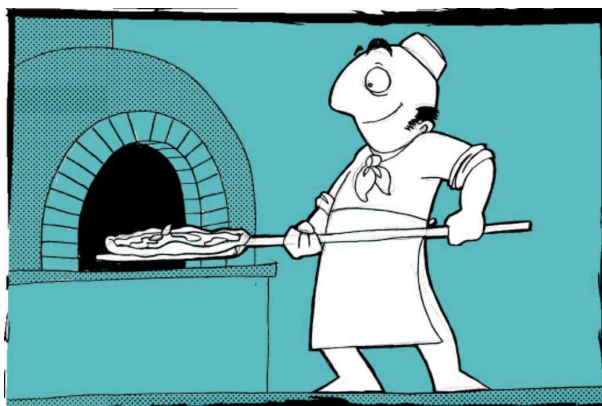
This prolonged contact causes dermatitis, called "wet jobs dermatitis".

Signs and symptoms of this dermatitis are: skin redness, vesicles, papules, itching, dry hands, cracking, hardening and thickening of

the skin, sometimes even skin infections; of course it is also important in this case to rely on personal protection: there are today perfectly protective gloves, very light and comfortable.

If you can, try to alternate activities in contact with water to other work that you must do, to reduce the permanence of the hands in water (for example the manual washing of pans and filling/emptying of dishwashers, cleaning of bathrooms and dusting of furniture etc.)

MICROCLIMATE



It is necessary to keep the ambient temperature within reasonable limits to prevent endangering of workers' health (i.e. heat stress, heat exhaustion) and in order to achieve as much as possible wellbeing at work.

Many activities, including those of tourism, may cause a heavy physical and mental stress if carried out in adverse environmental conditions.

Work clothing should always be adapted to environmental conditions.

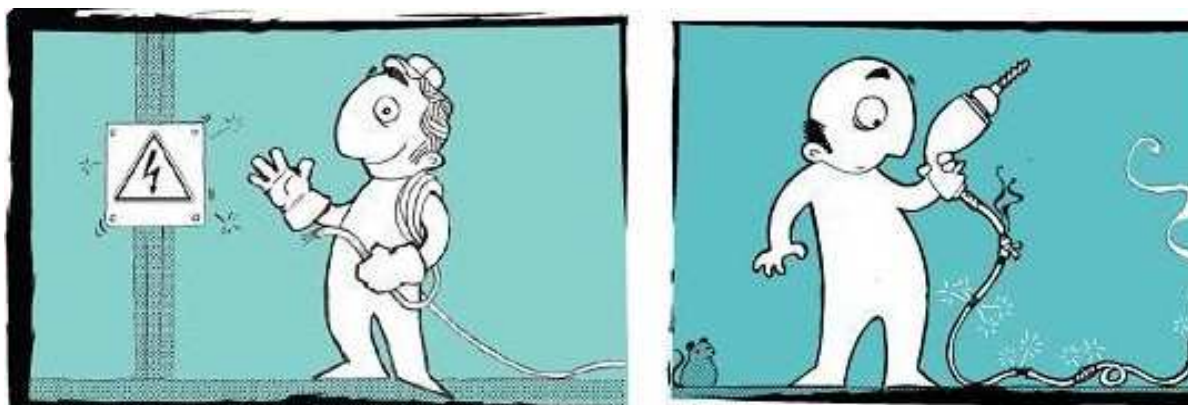
For outdoor activities in winter, you should always have a good coat and a good protection of ears and hands; in summer, lightweight clothing and shoes in light colours are required. When entering into refrigerating rooms a suitable jacket must always be worn

In the kitchen it is appropriate to adapt the clothing to microclimatic conditions and always drink plenty of water, even in winter.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

ELECTRICAL INJURIES

In addition to direct contact with live wires and equipment you must consider the risk of indirect contact with electricity, that is when parts of electrical equipment normally not in tension (for example the shell of machineries or tools.) become electrified due to an internal fault or for the loss of insulation. In these cases, touching the casing of the broken appliance, the human body is submitted to the passage of electricity.

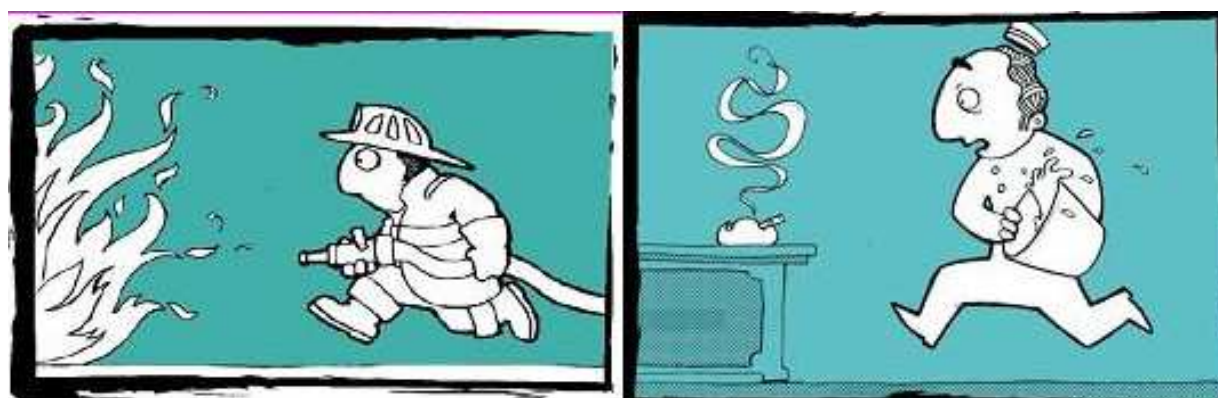


YOU MUST ALWAYS INSPECT THE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT BEFORE CONNECTING IT!

You have to be very careful that water or a spillage of chemicals does not invest cables and electrical equipment. Ask that plugs, switches or damaged cables are immediately replaced. You should always avoid the overload of multiple sockets.

FIRE PREVENTION

The fire is the contemporary product of three elements (combustible material - oxygen - a fire starter). To avoid a fire you have to be careful that these three elements are not present simultaneously.



Therefore combustible materials should not be piled in the workplace when there are ignition sources (electrical equipment, processes that use open flames or other ignition sources etc.).

Pay attention: those who have the responsibility must check that electrical installations are set up according to the law requirements; indeed, many fires are triggered by electrical anomalies.

At the end of their use, appliances and electrical equipment should never be left on.

Remember:

-that every fire produces poisonous gases that tends to go up to the top of the room, so the more breathable air is near the floor.

-to escape from the site of a fire, you have to crawl along the floor and follow the procedures laid down in the emergency plan for the safe evacuation (that is mandatory in all workplaces).

BIOHAZARD

This term refers to the risk of contracting diseases due to exposure to viruses, bacteria, microscopic fungi, pests; sometimes are insects bites to pass these microorganisms to people. Let's talk about infectious diseases, mainly, but not only . Microorganisms and insects can also be the source of allergic diseases. Care must be taken in tidying the rooms because of possible contact with blood and body fluids, especially if you have small wounds from which germs can be absorbed. This can happen



in collecting and handling dirty linen.

It is recommended to use disposable gloves and to prevent allergies caused by latex; it is better to use gloves made of vinyl or nitrile compounds.

Attention to possible sharp objects forgotten by customers. Attention also in waste collection: there might be needles, syringes, blades.

Flour dust may cause allergic reactions, caused by a parasite: the flour mite. Symptoms are: asthma, rhinitis, conjunctivitis, dermatitis, all caused by sensitisation to the dust of wheat. There are many people who become sensitised to flour; therefore we must be careful not to raise flour dusts, using a slightly damp work surface (preferably made of steel) and using sealing lids in mixers and agitators.



If when working with flour (or soon after), you feel stinging in your eyes, you have a stuffy nose or cough you must talk about these health issues with the competent doctor.

Insect bites can cause health problems too. Insects bites at our latitudes usually do not cause serious health problems (just some itching and local pain) and then do not require any special medical treatment, only cold compresses, a bit of ammonia (or a little vinegar).

Some people, however, are particularly sensitive to stings of Hymenoptera (bees, wasps and hornets) and may have a general allergic reaction (hives, skin rashes spread across multiple parts of the body, difficulty in breathing, vomiting).

Take note of this and, in case of doubt, talk to the competent doctor.

ERGONOMICS

Ergonomics has as its object the human activity in relation with environmental conditions, equipment and organization. Its aim is to adapt these conditions to the needs of human beings, taking into consideration their characteristics and activities. It was first developed to investigate and enforce design rules to protect the life of workers and increase the efficiency and reliability of the man-machine systems. It then extended its scope, with regards to the continuing changes of the requests in the field of health and well-being.

The current goal is to contribute to the design of objects, services, and working and living environments that respect men's and women's limits enhancing their operational capabilities.

An important example is the contribution that ergonomics can provide to define the correct level of movement and physical activity of female/male workers.

Both immobility and overwork are considered a source of wear and tear, unfavourable to our organism. Health troubles do not only derive from lifting excessive weights or forced and repetitive movements, but also from too much sedentary work. The jobs in the hotel/restaurants/catering industry are characterized also for the frequent amount of manual handling of loads, particularly in kitchens, in the cleaning of rooms and in warehouses, along with the "pressure" that work activities in difficult positions can cause on our musculoskeletal system.

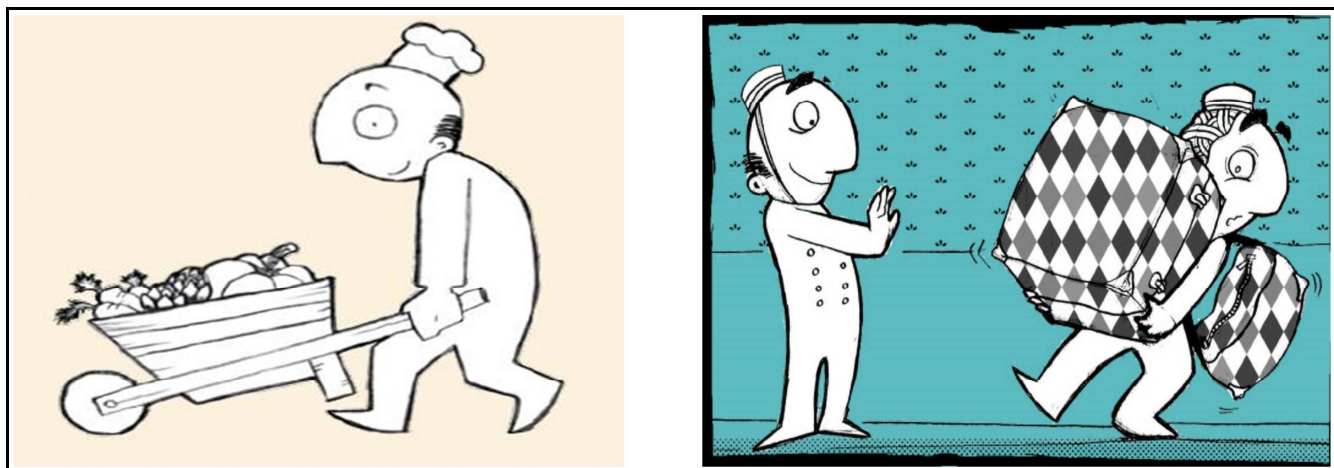
In addition, workers of this sector must sometimes carry out their activities in particular areas which force them to work in awkward positions, such as in the cleaning of bathrooms, change of linen in low beds, cleaning of furniture etc.

During the cleaning, you must:

- avoid abrupt movements
- not assume awkward positions (as much as possible), not stretch to reach high places but rather use ladders, do not bend your back, but bend your knees when cleaning the lower parts of the furniture or the floor under the beds,
- keep a straight back posture whilst using the broom or the vacuum cleaner or the floor mop, always holding the handles at the top
- pay attention to alternate heavy tasks (i.e. making beds or window cleaning) with lighter ones (like dusting or hoovering).
- pay attention also to alternate activities carried out with raised arms with activities carried out without lifting the shoulders (e.g. cleaning windows and then floors).

We must act as much as possible to prevent injuries :

- it is advisable to keep heavier materials of frequent use at hip height (the right way to lift and carry weights);
- it is also advisable to employ light and easily folding vacuum cleaners; to employ trolleys easy to carry and with wheels suitable for the types of floors of the premises, including those with carpets.



When manual handling of loads is necessary it is important to limit the weight for transport or lifting and therefore:

- do not fill too much the garbage bags;
- use special carts for moving rubbish bags and the laundry both clean or dirty;
- avoid overfilling the carts (better to carry more carts which are less full)
- make sure there are no obstacles along the way where it is possible to stumble;
- when possible use elevators;
- ask for the help of another person to turn over mattresses and lift the heavy pans;
- use a cart for replenishing the pantry;
- avoid carrying too many items at a time;
- adopt appropriate body positions when you lift a weight:
 - bend your knees, keeping your back straight;
 - keep one foot ahead of the other.
 - Use your leg muscles, bending your legs, putting the weight on your leg muscles rather than loading the back ;
 - keep your back upright
 - keep the load as close as possible to your body while keeping arms bent;
 - avoid twisting your body and the bending of your spine

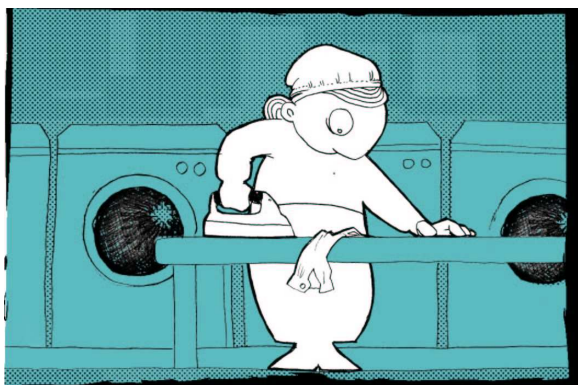
-avoid taking or putting down loads at ground level or above your head.

It should also be avoided the manual transport by a single person of

-crates of mineral water,

-oil drums or drinks barrels or other heavy materials.

In these cases you have to make use of suitable mechanical tools or ask for help from colleagues.



If luggage doesn't have any wheels, porters must always use suitable trolleys.

When working requires prolonged standing (as in ironing, reception activities, security etc.) you should change your position regularly(as much as possible).

To remain stationary in a standing position is bad for our musculoskeletal system and the circulation , it wouldn't be correct always to

work standing upright.

During breaks chairs or stools must be available to avoid standing up too long.

Walking a lot requires special footwear, with soles not too soft and a good foot support.

Putting into practice ergonomic principles we can improve barmen's and waiters' work.

YOUR ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION AT WORK

Try to be involved as much as possible in the planning of work shifts, in organising holidays, in the choice of equipment and chemical products to be used and the choice of clothing: always take all opportunities of more participation that are on offer.

To take part in the organization at work is your right.

Make sure that your right to have breaks during your work is guaranteed (ask about your Workers' Representative for safety, RLS.)

Request professional training and refresher courses needed to perform your tasks well, as it is states in the Unique Text on Health and Safety .

Never forget that human and professional solidarity among colleagues helps you to work better and is also good for your health.

LOGISTICS



For prolonged outdoor jobs you should always have proper washroom facilities, as required by the law.

If it is necessary to work alone you must have an effective means of communication and a valid well-defined system to report any hazardous situations.

FIRST AID AND EMERGENCIES



It is important to know where the first aid box is kept and who are the workers who handle it, how you can organize yourself to deal with "simple cases", which does not require the intervention of the emergency team; for example, medications of minor wounds or minor burns.

What is the number to contact the competent doctor?

Who are the first aid operators?

Many hotels and some restaurants are now equipped with a semi-automatic defibrillator, a device that can also be used by ordinary people after a brief training. This device gives greater chances of success for early resuscitation in cases of cardiac arrest. It is important to know whether this device is available or not in your workplace and who is in charge for using it.



This symbol, placed in a location visible to all, indicates the emergency exit, which in an emergency leads you out in the open air or in another safe place. The emergency exit shall ensure, in case of danger, the rapid evacuation from workplaces. It applies to all emergencies: fire, explosions, gas leaks, natural disasters etc. Not only in these exceptional events you should look for this symbol in your workplace. It is

important to know well in advance where the escape route is.

In case of an emergency you may be frightened and confused and smoke may hinder your sight so that you may not be able to locate any symbol. If you keep in mind the emergency exit shown by this sign then you will not have to look for it when you need it.

NO ALCOHOL OR DRUGS AT WORKPLACE

In tourism too there are activities for which the consumption of alcohol and drugs is absolutely forbidden (i.e. driving cars, trucks, boats or forklifts).

We must in these cases not drink alcohol or take any drugs even in the period preceding the beginning of the service in order to be completely free from the negative effects of these substances whilst working.



Even drinking small quantities of alcohol can reduce reflexes, it makes your sight blurry and causes sleepiness.

Because of this some new regulations have strengthened preventive interventions and controls by Local Health Units inspectors to ensure that all work environments with a higher risk of injuries are alcohol and drugs free. Prevention is based first of all on the self discipline by the workers themselves,

thus showing a sense of responsibility.

A LIFESTYLE FOR GOOD HEALTH

What is cardiovascular disease?

This is the consequence of arteriosclerosis, a disease that affects the arteries and causes them to narrow and even to close. Because of it there is a reduction in the quantity of blood that reaches the various organs up to the complete absence of circulation.

The reduction or absence of the blood flow is called ischemia. All organs may be affected by arteriosclerosis.

Nowadays in Western Countries the main causes of death are ischemic heart disease (angina and myocardial infarction) and ischemic brain disease (temporary or permanent paralysis): for example, in Italy these diseases account for 41% of all causes of death. In developing countries the most frequent causes of death are: malnutrition, infectious diseases, complications of pregnancy; for example, in Senegal, only 12% of mortality is linked to cardiovascular diseases. However, the World Health Organization predicts that over the next few years, cardiovascular disease will be the leading cause of death in developing countries too.

What are the causes?

There is no single cause but a number of so-called risk factors², that increase the risk of getting cardiovascular diseases. It is estimated that these risk factors are responsible for 75% of all cardiovascular diseases.

The main ones are the same worldwide: hypertension, high blood levels of fat in the blood, diabetes, being overweight, lack of fruit in the diet, lack of physical activity, tobacco, alcohol.



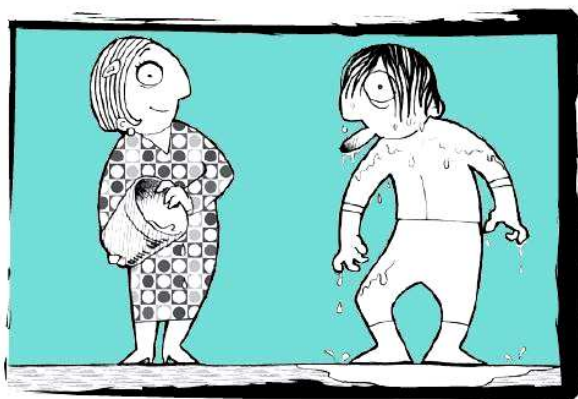
What can be done?

The set of measures that can reduce the risk is called cardiovascular prevention. When there are signs of disease is often necessary to rely on drugs or undergo a series of therapeutic procedures.

The reduction in mortality from cardiovascular diseases is related for 50% to actions on risk factors and for 40% to improved therapies. Therefore it is worth to commit ourselves to reduce our own cardiovascular risk.

What can I do?

1) I look closer to my eating habits, a healthy diet is the basis of cardiovascular prevention.



a-saturated fatty acids of animal origin must be less than 10% of the total energy intake and must be replaced by polyunsaturated fatty acids of vegetal origin as much as possible.

b-salt should be reduced up to less than 5 grams per day.

c-it is recommended to take 35-40 grams of vegetable fibres, taken together with whole wheat flour or fruit and vegetables.

d-200 grams of fruit (2-3 servings).

e-200 grams of vegetables (2-3 servings).

f-fish at least twice a week, once a week oil rich fish (such as sardines).

g-alcohol consumption should be limited to 20 grams/day for men, and 10 grams/day for women. (i.e., 2 glasses of wine per day for men and 1 glass for women).

2) It is important to increase our physical activity: healthy adults should devote at least 2.5 to 5 hours per week to physical activity of moderate intensity or 1 to 2.5 hours to intense physical activity. Sedentary people should be strongly encouraged to perform some light physical activity.

3) I stop smoking.

²This means all factors which can contribute to negative consequences for health (smoking, stress, noise, toxic substances in the environment of life or at work, dangerous machines etc).

4) I make a sound weight check: weight reduction of overweight or obese people has beneficial effects on blood pressure and blood fats.

5) I check my blood pressure: if it is often found high, medical attentions and drugs may be necessary.

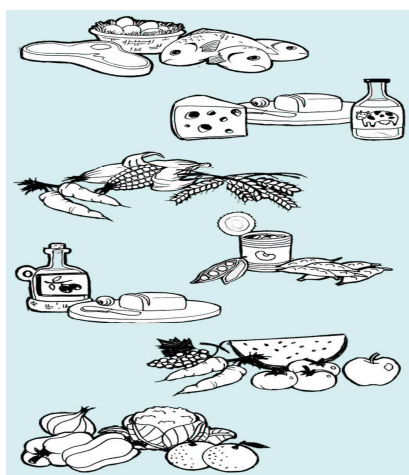
6) I ask for a blood check for diabetes, fat alterations, tests of kidney function: these tests are strongly recommended for men over 40 years and women over 50 years. It is possible that in case of alterations of these values medical measures such as special diets or drugs will be needed.

7) Finally I pay attention to the warning signs:

a) a tight sensation to the chest, chest pain or breathlessness which are manifested during physical efforts: I talk to my doctor; if the same symptoms are manifested at rest and last for a long time, I ask for transport to the hospital (118).

b) inability to perform activities due to shortness of breath: I talk to my family doctor; if the symptom is intense, at rest and worsens quickly I ask for transport to the hospital (118).

It is easy to find on the Internet sites (most of which have commercial purposes, but are anyway useful) that give tools to calculate your ideal weight, the composition of

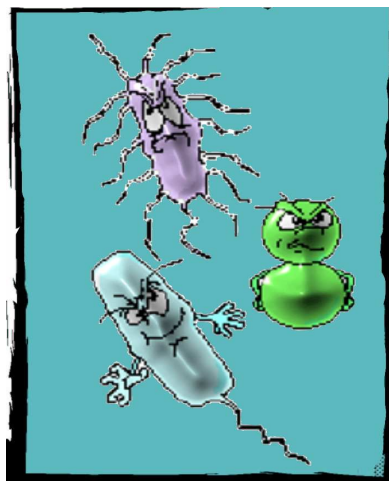


food, the energy consumption of different activities.

Basically I calculate my ideal weight, the calories I need, I take into consideration the content and quality of fats; at any change of diet I choose in particular the most rich in polyunsaturated fatty acids and those very low in cholesterol.

In all cases the principles of cardiovascular prevention must not be seen as a kind of bitter medicine to be taken unwillingly: it is instead something by which to assess and, if necessary, modify our lifestyle and diet in a way that it can be source of great satisfaction.

It is well known, for example, the positive effect on mood resulting from regular physical activity. Also healthy foods are none the less good and savoury.



THE PREVENTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

As a foreign worker you are at risk of many non-communicable diseases that can be underestimated or overlooked, but which have a high impact on health.

The impact of these diseases on health and work requires your attention not only when there is a need of a therapy, but also for the implementation of measures to prevent the occurrence of such diseases.

Changes of lifestyle and diet are the factors that influence more, and sometimes earlier, many non-communicable diseases.

For instance we can now prevent or early diagnose high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, renal failure, diseases due to alcohol and drugs abuse having access to sufficient information regarding the screening of these diseases and the related risk factors.

It is also particularly important to address the prevention of communicable diseases, infectious diseases in the case of foreign workers.

Such infectious diseases may be passed by the foreign worker who can also be infected for the first time in the host country.

The main factors (but not the only ones) that may favour the growth of these kinds of diseases and can lead to the spreading of them are: workers' housing conditions, the diet, the general lifestyle and diseases that the foreign worker had previously.

These factors are often very significant in the community of foreign workers especially in the early years after their arrival in Italy and can lead to communicable diseases. These occur in various ways : by direct contact as for some skin diseases e.g. scabies, through the air, as it is for some lung diseases, such as tuberculosis, through the digestive route, as it is for some gastro-intestinal infections.

Then both the foreign worker and his employer must be informed and involved in the prevention of communicable diseases among these workers.

In practical terms it is necessary that foreign workers, as regards to the prevention needs, are made aware of the existence of public health services devoted to perform the screening and the prophylaxis (chemo-prophylaxis or not) of communicable diseases, also in the case of trips to the country of origin. (i.e. important anti-malarial prophylaxis, many times); employers on the other hand, in collaboration with the social services, must try to ensure less critical housing conditions for foreign workers, to reduce risks and consequences of overcrowding, low hygiene and sanitation.

THE HEALTH CHECKS

In tourism too there are work activities where the so called "risk factors" (night work, the manual lifting of weights, exposure to chemicals, etc., see also page 19) can be present.

These risk factors may have adverse effects on health. It is therefore necessary, and



the law requires it, to check the fitness of workers who carry out these tasks at the beginning of their employment and then periodically.

Male/female workers must be well informed about these risks and how to prevent them.

These medical examinations are carried out by a specialist (competent doctor).

This professional, on the basis of the risks of work activities, produces a health

protocol (list of tests that are carried in addition to the visit, targeted to the specific risks of work activities).

The medical examination aims to identify precarious health conditions, illnesses [such as heart diseases, respiratory diseases, metabolic diseases (diabetes) etc.] or allergic reactions that may counteract the work to be done.

Periodic monitoring by the competent doctor aims also to identify early damage to health due to work-related risks such as:

- 1) Allergic manifestations due to respiratory inhalants, like flour or other food allergens, dust mites in the cleaning of rooms or exposure to latex (latex gloves), handling detergents or disinfectants (room attendants, operators in the kitchen);
- 2) skeletal muscle disorders of the spine or the upper limbs due to mechanical overload in manual handling of loads or awkward postures (porters, room attendants etc);
- 3) Disorders related to the sleep-wake cycle for the night workers (doormen, porters, shift workers)

The competent doctor also fills in questionnaires during the visit, more frequently related to the occupational risks (respiratory disorders, skeletal disorders, stress caused by work etc.), but also aimed to evaluate the overall health conditions as perceived by the workers themselves (WAI Work Ability Index).

When health troubles may be related to the work done, the competent doctor can decide the consultation of additional specialists (such as ophthalmologists, otolaryngologists, cardiologists, allergologists, etc.) and the adoption of more stringent preventive measures as well, when this proves to be necessary.

PROTECTING THE MOST VULNERABLE WORKERS

People don't all have the same capacity to withstand risky situations at work.

There are workers 'categories to whom special care must be given, because they are more vulnerable.

Our legislation gives precise instructions on this and it has established very clearly what you need to do for prevention when there are women of childbearing age, minors and persons with disabilities in the workplaces.

We hereby consider which we see as the main points, reminding you anyway that this is an important issue: it is therefore worth talking to the experts who are at work with you to learn more about and solve your specific questions.



Let's start with pregnancy: pregnancy makes women more sensitive to many occupational risks, with possible negative consequences on the health of the mother and the child that shall be born.

Our law states that when there is a woman of childbearing age at work a specific risk assessment must be done.

It has to be well understood what activities expectant mothers can actually do and what are instead to be avoided.

All women of childbearing age must be informed of the results of this risk assessment as well as the RLS, this is our national law.

When an expectant mother is actually present at work, then we must implement what has been agreed upon by the risks assessment process and special precautions will be taken if necessary. Pregnant women will be excluded from night work and manual handling of loads, they will not stand up for more than 50% of the working time, they will not come into contact with harmful chemicals etc.

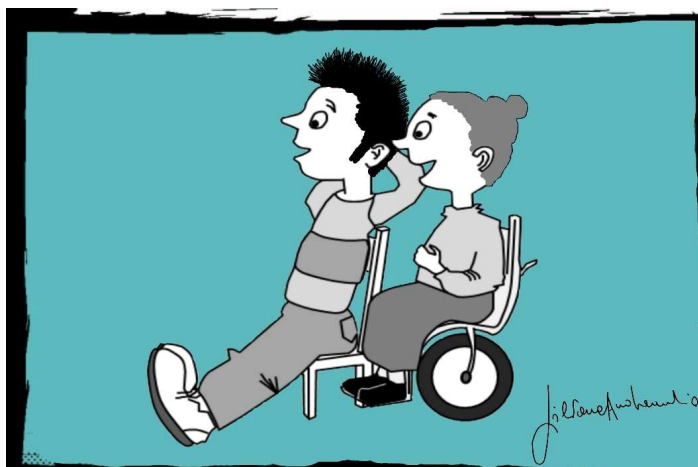
When the work does not involve special risks, pregnant women are nonetheless entitled to a period of leave that begins two months before and ends three months after the childbirth (maternity leave).

If necessary, to guarantee that the job of the expectant mother can continue smoothly a change of the department or of the job may also be established to protect better mother and child's health. If this change is not possible, then the employer must send a written notice to the Labour Inspectorate to request an earlier leave.

An earlier leave may be also requested (by a gynaecologist) when the work activities are ok, but the mother's health is not good.

In tourism it is however often possible for pregnant women to continue their work as before for all the period stated by regulations (and then until the end of the seventh month) with the adoption of only a few preventive measures.

THE BEST TIME TO INFORM FEMALE WORKERS ON ALL THESE ASPECTS IS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE EMPLOYMENT



Even for minors' work a special care is always needed. As we know, wars, extreme poverty and the many tragedies of our world bring also many minors in Europe and even here in Venice. Here in Venice there are voluntary associations whose mission is to give assistance to unaccompanied foreign minors. Our law states that minors cannot be exposed to high levels of noise, extreme heat, infectious agents

such as viruses and bacteria or dangerous chemical products.

As for expectant mothers, night work is also prohibited for minors.

The employer must do a specific risk assessment for minors, taking into account their special needs for training and information due to their lack of experience and unawareness of the occupational risks to which they can be exposed.

Our legislation also provides for special measures to support the disabled; the first support is to favour their debut in the world of work, because a good job is for everybody, not only a source of income but also an opportunity to make more enjoyable our lives and enhance our skills.

In addition to support entering the labour market, our legislation also provides for a specific risk assessment for disabled work, to take into account the need of special health and safety measures on the basis of their disabilities. Nowadays IT contributes much to support the integration of disabled workers in the workplace and therefore their work performance is mostly quite good.

THE ADDED VALUE AND THE CONTRIBUTION THAT A PERSON CAN BRING TO A COMPANY DEPENDS ON HIS/HER CAPACITIES NOT BY THE FACT THAT HE OR SHE IS DISABLED OR NOT.

In tourism with the adoption of preventive measures it is possible to have a valid integration at work of people with physical, sensory or mental disabilities in a good number of cases.

AND YOU, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT? ³



What you read here are hints of general information. There is always a need, as Italian regulations state, to complete your qualification with a training course that will be provided for by your employer.

Now we ask you something:

-The training that you have received at your company is sufficient to protect you effectively from occupational risks, or there is something missing and according to you your training should be improved ?

If there are any problems with regards to this talk to your company's Safety Coordinator or with your RLS or directly

to the employer.

-Did you receive all the personal protective equipment that is required?

Is it effective? Can you easily use all these tools all the time that their use is required?

If there are problems with these things also you have to talk with the safety officer or directly with the employer.



-Are the breaks which you get enough?

If they aren't, you have also to talk of this with the safety officer or the RLS, because mental overload can damage the health and increase the risk of accidents.

At your workplace do you feel well or do you suffer from a sense of isolation, of not being a part of a working team? For these aspects the competent doctor can help and you have then to contact him or if there is

no competent doctor you will speak to the RLS.

³We also used the image of Napo, the character of the cartoon series of the European Agency for health and safety at work. Napo represents symbolically the figure of the worker, regardless of industrial branch, professional sector, by its ethnic and cultural background <http://www.napofilm.net/en/who-is-napo>.