

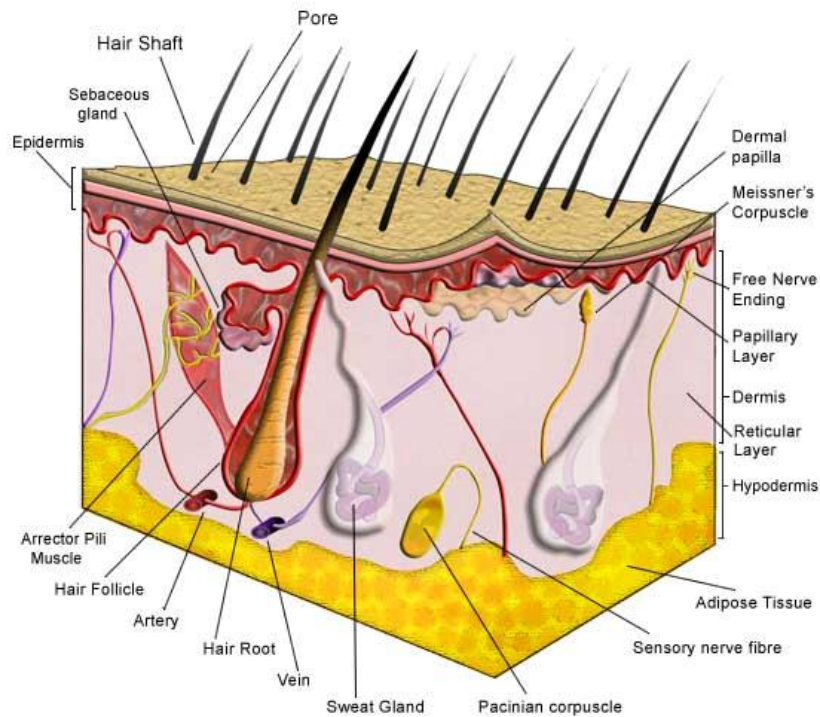
The Skin and Dermatitis

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and COSHH 2002 puts a duty upon employers to provide health surveillance for employees who are likely to be exposed to substances hazardous to health.

Health surveillance should be carried out when employees are exposed to skin sensitizers and irritants, records of the health surveillance must be kept by the employer for at least 40 years.

The purpose of health surveillance is to protect the health of the employees by detecting any skin problems in the early stages, once a skin condition has progressed to a moderate or advanced stage i.e. contact dermatitis it may be very difficult to treat an individual and permanent skin damage could have been done.

Diagram of the Skin:



What is Dermatitis?

Dermatitis is inflammation of the skin. It affects about one in five people at some time in their lives.

Occupational dermatitis is normally contact dermatitis; it could be itchy, painful, redness, cracked skin and bleeding. It is quite a common condition and responsible for much suffering. The condition is caused by an allergy or irritation as a result of substances found in the work place that comes into direct contact with the skin.

People who develop skin conditions should be seen by an Occupational Health Professional to determine if it is work related. Allergic contact dermatitis should be confirmed by patch testing and be treated with anti-inflammatory drugs and with ointments and skin cleansers.