

Te Korowai Whakaruruhau

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service



November 2024

Kia ora Koutou,

As we approach the end of another challenging yet productive year, it's natural to feel the pressure to wrap up projects and meet deadlines. This busy period can often lead to increased stress and a higher risk of accidents, both in the workplace and at home.

I want to take this time to remind everyone of the importance of maintaining a safe and healthy work environment, even as we hustle to finish the year strongly. It's crucial to stay vigilant and prioritise safety, no matter how busy we get.

Thank you for your continued commitment to safety and excellence. Let's work together to make these final weeks of the year both successful and safe.

In this issue we look at:

- Damstra reporting
- Dehydration, facts you need to know
- Six Steps to Calm
- Courses
- Whakatauki
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Angus Clark
Associate Director – HSW

Damstra reporting



How to locate the ability to report on Damstra has changed with the intranet upgrade. This is how to find Damstra reporting:

1. Open the Staff Intranet
2. Select work and personal
3. Report a safety injury, incident or observation

You can also locate the function by clicking on your picture or initials icon on the top right of the Intranet homepage.

Below are some definitions to help with reporting:

Report an injury

Any injury to an employee, student, contractor or visitor during the course of work activity or whilst on campus.

Report an incident (no injury)

Any unplanned event or occurrence that under slightly different circumstances could have caused harm, injury, ill-health or damage. This category includes any near miss which is defined as an event or situation that could have resulted in injury, illness, damage or loss but did not do so due to chance, corrective action or timely intervention.

Report an observation

Report observed safe (positive) or unsafe (hazardous) acts, behaviours or conditions.

HSW Community of Interest Group (CoI)

The next meeting date is to be confirmed and will be posted on the Community of Interest Teams channel.



Request to join the HSW Community of Interest Group via hsw@auckland.ac.nz

Your HSW team

Should you need to contact the University of Auckland's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team your contacts can be found [here](#)

Dehydration: facts you need to know

With summer on its way, keep yourself and your team hydrated and reduce the risk of workplace accidents.

60 - 70% OF OUR BODY CONSISTS OF WATER

Safety

- **1–2% dehydration** workers experience decreased cognitive abilities, reduced concentration and alertness, and slower reaction times. Note: 1% dehydration is about an 800ml fluid deficit for an 80kg adult male.
- **3% dehydration** can slow reaction times to the same extent as having 0.08 Blood Alcohol Content (BAC).
- At 0.08 BAC you are 5 times more likely to crash your car.
- Think about how much more likely you are to have a workplace accident when dehydrated.

Productivity

- **1% dehydration** has been shown to cause a 12% reduction in worker productivity.
- **2% dehydration** your heart rate increases by up to 8 beats per minute, increasing perception of effort, and decreasing performance.
- **3 - 4% dehydration** your heart rate increases by up to 12 beats per minute, your capacity for muscular work declines and worker productivity decreases by up to 50%.

Tips for Staying Hydrated

- Drink when you feel thirsty, if not before.
- Get your fluids from water or other low-calorie beverages, such as plain coffee or tea, or sparkling or flavoured waters.
- Carry a bottle of water and refill it as needed during the day.
- Drink at regular times. For example, drink with meals.
- Drink water before, during, and after exercise.
- Drink extra fluids during hot weather or when you are sick.

Electrolytes

Electrolytes do a lot of important things in your body. They help keep the amount of water in your body balanced, as well as maintain pH levels and help move nutrients in and out of cells. Electrolytes also help muscles, nerves and organs work properly. You shouldn't need to drink electrolyte drinks on a regular basis because your electrolyte levels are probably balanced.

There are times when you may become dehydrated and electrolyte drinks can help you rehydrate and replenish your electrolytes. Some examples include:

- Being in extreme heat
- Doing an intense workout
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Drinking too much alcohol

(Active Safety November 2024; NIH News in health May 2023, Eatingwell.com)

The benefits of self-compassionate touch



Self-compassionate touch is a science-backed anti-anxiety practice which we hope will bring you a sense of calm and wellbeing and empower you to navigate life's challenges with greater ease and resilience.

It is well established that touch has a beneficial power. Touch helps regulate cortisol, the stress hormone, according to one recent study. Other research has shown that prolonged levels of cortisol in the brain make it harder to treat mental health issues. In other words, the resulting hormonal surge we get from stress results in us finding it difficult to relieve our symptoms. That's why reducing the stress in the first place is so vital.

There are simple methods we can use to reduce our daily stress which could be as simple as holding someone's hand which has been shown to reduce cortisol in the brain.

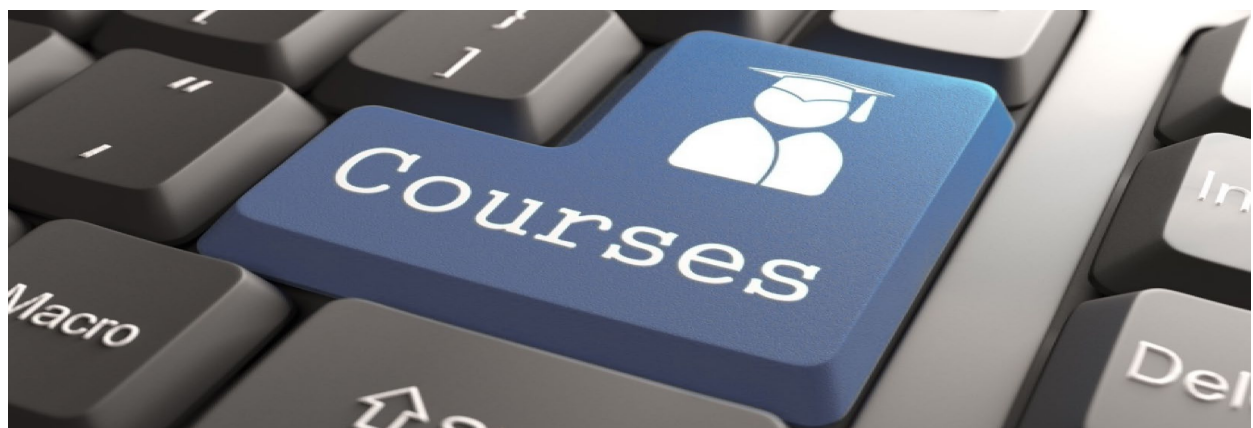
If we're on our own, we can reap some of the benefits of physical contact by ourselves using self-compassionate touch. A study published in April 2024, found that participants who practiced self-compassionate touch for only 20 seconds had lower amounts of cortisol compared to the control group.

The team behind this research call the following exercise "micro practice" and it's effective because it can help us to self-regulate using a combination of self-compassionate thinking combined with touch.

1. Close your eyes and bring to mind a recent mistake or failure. Notice what arises in your body as you remember it.
2. Send kindness and warmth to yourself by bringing one hand to your belly and the other to your chest – imagine that you are giving yourself a hug.
3. Allow yourself to embrace what you are feeling and ask yourself: "How can I be a friend to myself in this moment?".
4. When you feel ready, open your eyes.



There is an abundance of information on the internet around self-compassion offering meditation and scripts to follow. Below is a helpful wheel to get you started.



Courses

Incident Management & Investigation course

This course will equip individuals responsible for conducting incident investigations with the skills to effectively manage an incident scene and conduct effective investigations. Upon completion, delegates will possess the necessary skills to conduct comprehensive and concise investigation reports, contributing to a safer and more informed work environment.

Key Content

On successful completion, participants will:

- Be able to explain why workplace accidents need to be reported and investigated.
- Gain insight into the importance of incident investigation, barriers to reporting and how to overcome them.
- Understand the legal, financial, and moral aspects of investigating workplace incidents.
- Understand how to safely manage an incident scene.
- Understand the concepts of multiple causation and root-cause analysis.
- Be able to detail an incident investigation process using a hypothetical incident.
- Produce an incident investigation report based on a documented incident.
- Understand what is a Notifiable Event and what actions to take if one occurs

This course is suitable for all members of staff who are required to undertake incident investigations and health & safety representatives

Risk Assessment

This workshop will assist staff in understanding how to undertake a successful work-related risk assessment for both activities and locations.

Key Content

By the end of this session participants will be able to:

- Know the definition of terms such as hazard, risk, likelihood, consequence
- Know how to approach the 5 steps of the risk assessment process
- Understand the importance of good preparation
- Identify significant hazards
- Identify the people who may be harmed
- Be familiar with the hierarchy of control and evaluate the suitability of existing control measures
- Know how to calculate the risk level attached to a particular hazard
- Be able to break down processes into tasks
- Understand how to communicate the risk assessment findings and the importance of doing this well
- Recognise the conditions prompting a review of risk assessment.

This risk assessment course is suitable for members of staff and postgraduate students involved in the risk assessment process. For students who would like to attend this course, pls send your name, student ID number and the faculty name to od@auckland.ac.nz

Whakatauki



Waiting for the summer days (@whakatauki)

Thank you for taking the time to read your HSW Newsletter!