



Support for people diagnosed with silicosis

Making a work injury claim

If you're concerned that you have been exposed to silica and you haven't yet been tested, you should contact your doctor as soon as possible and ask for an assessment at a Thoracic Clinic. In the early stages of silicosis, you may not show any symptoms. Continued exposure to silica dust can increase the risk of disease progression, so early detection is extremely important.

If you've been diagnosed with silicosis we understand that you may be worried or anxious about what this means for you and your family. We're here to support you to understand what treatment and support services you can access through the Return to Work scheme to manage your condition.

How do I make a work injury claim?

If you're an employee and your employer is registered under the Return to Work scheme, we'll manage your claim if it's approved. If your employer is self insured, you'll need to make a claim directly with them so that they can assess and manage your claim if it's approved. If you're unsure if your employer is registered with ReturnToWorkSA, call us and we can let you know.

If your employer is registered with ReturnToWorkSA or you're unsure what to do, it's important that you call us on **08 8233 2545** as soon as possible after your diagnosis so we can start your claim process.

We've established a dedicated team to assess and manage silicosis claims. A Claims Officer within this team will speak with you over the phone, and when you are ready, arrange a time to meet with you and your employer to find out more about your diagnosis, assess your claim and determine how they can best support you to manage your condition if your claim is approved. You'll be asked for information about your employment history as part of the claims process and when you have a health screening.

Silicosis claims

Call us on **08 8233 2545** Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5.00pm or email us at **silicosis@rtwsa.com**.

What support will I receive?

If your claim is accepted, your Claims Officer will provide you with early assistance and personalised support that considers your diagnosis, and the specific circumstances of you and your employer.

You may be entitled to receive financial support for:

- lost wages
- medical, surgical and hospital expenses
- medicines essential to support your condition
- rehabilitation treatment and equipment services
- lump sum payments.

Your Claims Officer can let you know what support and services are available to you based on your diagnosis and individual circumstances.

Returning to work after a silicosis diagnosis

Your Claims Officer will work with you, your employer and medical experts to determine how your silicosis diagnosis affects your return to work.

Some people diagnosed with silicosis may be able to return to their current role, while others may need to seek alternative employment to avoid further exposure to silica dust.

If you have capacity to return to work but you're unable to return to your current role, your Claims Officer will assist you to identify suitable work elsewhere. This may include referring you to a job placement service where you'll work with a consultant who will assess your employment background and consider your transferable skills. They will assist you to develop a plan which will help you to build relevant job skills so that you can gain suitable employment.

It's natural to be concerned that a silicosis diagnosis may exclude you from working in industries that you may have been working in your whole life. Your Claims Officer will support you to maximise your options.

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment you can call ReturnToWorkSA on 13 18 55 through the National Relay Service (NRS) www.relayservice.gov.au.

For languages other than English call the Interpreting and Translating Centre on 1800 280 203 and ask for an interpreter to call ReturnToWorkSA on 13 18 55.

For braille, audio or e-text of the information in this fact sheet call 13 18 55.