

Further information about your Offshore Medical with Work Health Solutions.

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The Off-Shore Environment

Offshore installations range in size from crews of less than 20 to large installations with crews of up to 250. Destinations may be up to 300 Km offshore. Generally, facilities are 24 hour operations with regular shift work. Workers spend 2-3 weeks offshore at a time. Travel to and from installations is usually by helicopter. Living accommodation often comprises shared cabins. Many tasks in the offshore environment require a lot of physical strength, with heavy manual handling. Much of the equipment is very heavy, needing regular maintenance which often has to be done in a confined space. Installations are usually multi-leveled with access between levels being via steep open staircases. These are often external staircases. There are often numerous fire and explosion-proof safety doors which can be very heavy to open and close.

If someone falls gravely ill, an emergency medical evacuation may be required. This could be in adverse weather conditions which could endanger the crew of the helicopter and medical personnel involved. There may be regular periods of time where travel by helicopter may not be possible for up to 2 to 3 days or more because of poor weather.

Employees are usually required to hold a valid certificate of offshore survival training. The training is physically demanding and usually takes three days. Activities include getting in and out of a life raft from the water, climbing the rescue nets and helicopter underwater escape simulation. This includes the use of a re-breather device and cold water emersion. Basic fire-fighting skills are also taught and participants are instructed in escape from smoke-filled rooms using breathing apparatus.

Because of these inherent risks in the offshore environment it is important to be completely honest with the examining doctor about your past medical history and any medical conditions you may have. The doctor can then determine whether you can safely and work in the offshore environment.

If you have any questions about this or you feel there are any medical conditions which may prevent you from travelling offshore, you are welcome to contact the doctor prior to your medical examination.

OGUK (Oil & Gas UK Offshore Medical)

The OGUK Offshore Medical (formerly known as a UKOOA) is one of the most common medicals we carry out and is required by many companies in order to work offshore in NZ and in overseas waters.

We strongly advise you to book your OGUK exam many days or weeks before you need the certificate. If you have not seen a dentist in the last year we would recommend you make an appointment and have an examination before you see us. Tooth decay and gum disease is a common reason for not being able to issue a certificate and may cause delays to you being able to get off-shore.

If you are due to carry out an emergency response role (ERT) such as fire fighting please let us know before your appointment as further testing is often required. For more sedentary ERT roles (such as coordination) this is not usually needed.

The OGUK medical involves:

- A questionnaire
- Blood pressure and pulse reading
- Vision test
- Colour vision test in some cases
- Hearing test – audiometry
- Height and weight check, in order to calculate your BMI
- Urine Sample
- Medical examination
- Some companies require a drug test or a drug & alcohol test. This is determined by the individual company.

Please note in some cases it is not possible to issue an OGUK certificate at the time of the consultation. Common reasons for this include - the need for review by a dentist, laboratory investigations or further information required from your treating doctor.

The OGUK requirements are very rigid around this and no certificate can be issued until all the results are available as required. It is important to understand the OGUK examination is not simply a “rubber stamp” exercise but a detailed and complex examination process.

Work Health Solutions Ltd accepts no liability for delays in issuing medical certificates, inability to issue a certificate or cancelled appointments.

What to do and bring for your Offshore Medical

Before you come

Please complete the OGUK questionnaire and either e-mail (info@workhealthsolutions.co.nz), or fax (04 9387374) it back to us or bring it with you on the day of your appointment.

On the day of your appointment

We recommend that you arrive in good time for your appointment and please let us know if you are delayed (Ph. 021 362 775). Your assessment will take approximately 1 hour.

Please bring along your completed questionnaire if you have not already sent it back to us and details of any prescribed medicines that you are currently taking.

When attending a medical with Work Health Solutions please be sure to bring photo identification with you, we will accept: Passport or Driving Licence or Company ID.

On arrival please report to Reception. You will be asked for your photographic identification. A copy will be made of your ID which will be kept with your medical records.

You will be asked to provide a urine sample so it is helpful to have a full bladder. If you wear glasses, contact lenses or require a hearing aid, we ask that you bring these along too.

If you are having travel vaccinations, we ask that you also bring along any immunisation history that you, or your local GP, may have.

Thank you in advance.



Most common medical condition enquiries

Our doctors are frequently asked various questions surrounding medical conditions and medication being taken prior to appointments. We have listed the most common enquiries below for you to read through in advance of your medical with Work Health Solutions.

Anti-depressants

Individual assessment is required. In some cases use of anti-depressants as maintenance therapy may be permissible.

Asthma

Well controlled asthma which does not interfere with exercise tolerance is usually permissible.

Colour blindness

This is not a bar to offshore work unless good colour vision is an essential requirement of the job.

Contact lenses

Contact lenses are permitted offshore. We recommended a spare pair of spectacles is taken offshore with you.

Diabetes

Diabetes controlled by diet alone or diet and tablets is not an obstacle to working offshore, provided the condition is well controlled and there are no complications.

The situation regarding diabetics requiring insulin is more complex. It is likely that reports will be required from GP and specialists to confirm the condition is well controlled. Each case needs individual assessment and discussion with the Operator's Medical Advisor. The risks associated with insulin dependent diabetes are incompatible with unrestricted fitness to work in the off shore environment and only a restricted certificate will be issued. More frequent medicals will be required and the certificate will only be valid for a named installation.

Epilepsy

A statement from the employer is required to determine whether the individual is employed in a Category 1 job (safety critical e.g. scaffolders, rope access personnel, crane operators, drill crew), or Category 2 (other). Specialist reports will be required.

Individuals are assessed on a case by case basis. A minimum of 6 months free of seizures must elapse.

Epipen

The use of an Epipen is unlikely to be compatible with work offshore.

Hearing aid

Provided safety announcements and warnings can be heard without use of a hearing aid and the device is intrinsically safe, hearing aids may be worn offshore.

Hernia

An inguinal hernia (in the groin) poses a risk of strangulation and requires surgery before return offshore.

An umbilical hernia (at the belly button) may be acceptable after assessment.

Heart Attack

Individual assessment is required with reports from GP and specialist. A minimum of 3 months must elapse before return offshore and the individual must have successfully completed an exercise test (treadmill test).

Hypertension

Hypertension, or high blood pressure is permissible provided it is well controlled and there are no complications.

Inflammatory bowel disease

Conditions such as ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease require individual assessment. The condition must be stable, with no unacceptable side effects from medication. The presence of a stoma is not necessarily incompatible with work offshore.

Overweight/Obesity

Individuals with a BMI of 40 or more are unlikely to obtain an unrestricted certificate for safety reasons. Verification of ability to don a lifejacket, fasten a 3 point harness and escape from a helicopter hatch will be required. General mobility to perform job tasks and to respond to emergency situations is essential.

Pacemakers

Some pacemakers can be affected by electromagnetic fields. Written statements from the employer/operator will be required detailing the strength of magnetic field to which the individual will be exposed in the course of their work, as well as from the cardiologist or pacemaker manufacturer regarding the risks.

Painkillers

Strong painkillers which have sedating side effects are incompatible with work offshore.

Sleep apnoea

Use of CPAP may be acceptable.

Sleeping pills

Sleeping pills cause drowsiness and impaired alertness and are not permitted offshore.

Stroke

A minimum of 6 months must elapse before return offshore. Individual assessment is required.

Vision

Having only one eye or poor vision in only one eye may be acceptable provided the individual has adjusted to the situation.

Warfarin

Warfarin may be permitted offshore in some circumstances. Cases require individual assessment and discussion with the Operator's Medical Advisor.

We look forward to meeting you.

