MATERION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Frequently Asked Questions about Beryllium and Skin Contact
FAQ 207

Can touching or handling beryllium in solid or massive form cause chronic beryllium disease (CBD)?

No, you cannot contract CBD through skin contact.

Can cuts involving beryllium cause CBD?

No. Cuts involving beryllium are no different than cuts from other metals. There are no specific beryllium-related, adverse health effects associated with skin cuts involving beryllium. However, open wounds can be a pathway for small particles to enter the skin. As a good hygienic practice, wounds should be properly cleaned and bandaged and kept clean to aid the healing process.

Does routine touching or handling of beryllium products in solid or massive form cause skin reactions or rash?

No, routine contact with beryllium metal has not been shown to result in a skin reaction or rash.

Can beryllium chips or dust imbedded under the skin cause beryllium sensitization?

Possibly. Therefore, we believe it prudent to warn that particulate lodged in the skin or entering skin wounds has the potential to result in sensitization to beryllium. It is important to remove imbedded chips or dust and keep skin wounds clean and covered.

What is beryllium sensitization?

Beryllium sensitization means a response in the immune system of a specific individual who has been exposed to beryllium. There are no associated physical or clinical symptoms and no illness or disability with beryllium sensitization alone, but the response that occurs through beryllium sensitization can enable the immune system to recognize and react to beryllium. While not every beryllium-sensitized person will develop CBD, beryllium sensitization is essential for development of CBD.

See our FAQ 203 - Frequently Asked Questions about the Beryllium Blood Lymphocyte Proliferation Test (BeBLPT), for more information on sensitization testing.

What is Materion Brush Inc.'s position on protecting the skin of beryllium workers from exposure to beryllium?

Materion Brush Inc. believes it is a good work practice to protect skin from contact with solutions containing fine beryllium particulate or salts, or fine particles containing beryllium. We also believe that no special skin protection is needed when handling clean metal or large clean metal pieces or chips. "Clean" is defined as visibly clean, and not coated with residual salts, or fine particulate in solutions or lubricants containing

beryllium. Good hygiene and safety practice dictates skin protection from cuts and abrasions, maintenance of skin cleanliness, cut and abrasion first-aid treatment and protection of wounds from contamination.

Examples of tasks where special skin protection is unnecessary:

- Packaging or handling of clean beryllium materials
- Non-destructive testing of clean beryllium samples

Examples of tasks where skin protection should be used to keep particulate off of the skin:

- All operations in which beryllium is coated with dust, fluid*, lubricant*, or surface oxide
- Machining beryllium

*Consistent with OSHA recommended good work practice, use skin protection to prevent skin contact with coolants and lubricants during processing of beryllium.

Materion Brush Inc. encourages those processing beryllium in ways which generate particulate containing beryllium to utilize engineering and work practice controls to keep beryllium work areas clean and to keep particulate containing beryllium out of the lungs, off the skin, off of clothing, in the work process, in the work area and on the plant site.

How can I obtain assistance?

If you have any questions regarding the above information, please contact your sales representative; our sales department at +1-216-486-4200; or the Product Safety Hotline at 1-800-862-4118 (in the U.S.) or +1-216-383-4019 (outside the U.S.). This document, as well as other product specific safety data information, can be found at www.materion.com. Additionally, information on the Beryllium Worker Protection Model and process specific safety guidance can be found in the Interactive Guide to Working Safely with Beryllium and Beryllium-containing Materials at www.berylliumsafety.com.