

Diver fact sheet and medical questionnaire

This fact sheet is about medical fitness for working divers and those considering a career as a commercial diver. Good health is essential to meet the physical and mental demands of diving. You also need a good level of physical fitness. Under the Diving at Work Regulations 1997, you must have a thorough initial medical examination by an Approved Medical Examiner of Divers (AMED). AMEDs are trained in diving medicine and approved by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The AMED will issue you with a certificate of medical fitness to dive, valid for up to 12 months. To renew the certificate, you must have an annual medical examination by an AMED before the expiry date.

It is a legal requirement that you must not dive in a diving project if you know of anything, including any illness or medical condition, which makes you unfit to dive.

Preparing for your initial medical

At the earliest possible stage, you should complete the accompanying medical questionnaire and ask your GP to sign it to confirm the medical history from your medical records (your GP may charge you a fee). You should then pass the questionnaire to an AMED who will assess whether there is anything in your medical history that might exclude you from a career in diving. The presence of a disqualifying medical condition identified at this stage may avoid the expense of an initial medical examination by an AMED. If you have an initial medical examination, you should complete it before committing yourself to the cost of diver training.

Certificate of medical fitness to dive

Following your medical examination, the AMED will issue you with a certificate of medical fitness to dive (MA2). You need to give this to the AMED at your next annual medical examination, for review. HSE Diving Inspectors may ask to see your current MA2 to ensure you have medical clearance to dive.

Return to work medical

Any illness or injury during your diving career may affect your fitness to work. Following certain conditions (eg any lung, heart, brain, nervous system, ear, nose or throat disorder, including decompression illness, or any illness or injury requiring you to be off work for more than 14 days), you must be re-examined by an AMED to assess your fitness to return to work. This involves a specific assessment of the possible effects of your illness or injury on diving safety and your ability to work as a diver. It does not replace the annual medical examination. You should contact an AMED after a period of illness or injury to consider if re-examination is required.

Appeals

If an AMED decides you are unfit to dive or fit to dive with restrictions, they should explain the reasons for their decision. The AMED may consult with a medical specialist before deciding on your fitness to dive. Once informed of the AMED's decision, you can appeal to HSE within 28 days for a review of the decision. For full details of how to appeal, see: www.hse.gov.uk/diving/medical-appeal.htm.

Medical questionnaire for completion by the candidate diver and their GP to confirm medical history (no examination is required)

QUESTION	YES	NO
(Females only) Are you pregnant or likely to be pregnant?		
Are you taking any prescribed or other medication?		
Do you have any allergies?		
Have you ever had or been treated for decompression illness?		
Have you ever had or do you now have:		
Cancer?		
Mental health problems (including panic attacks, claustrophobia)?		
Drug and/or alcohol misuse in the past three years?		
Lung disease (eg chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma)?		
Collapsed lung (pneumothorax)?		
Injury or surgery to the chest, lungs or heart?		
Disease of the heart and circulation (eg high blood pressure, angina, heart attack, chest pains, palpitations)?		
Disease of the brain or nervous system (eg epilepsy, stroke, multiple sclerosis, nerve damage)?		
Blackouts, recurrent fainting, collapsing or dizziness?		
Motion sickness?		
Migraine?		
Head injury with loss of consciousness or surgery to the head?		
Bone or joint problems or surgery (eg sciatica, spinal surgery)?		
Ear, nose, throat or sinus problems?		
Eye problems (eg loss of vision, double vision)?		
Diabetes or other hormone problems?		
Urinary or kidney problems or (males only) prostate problems?		
Stomach or intestinal problems or surgery (including stomas)?		
Skin disease?		
Blood or bleeding disorders?		

If the candidate diver or GP has any comments on the medical history, please use another sheet.

Candidate diver - I certify that the above answers are correct:

Full name..... DoB.....

Address.....

Signature..... Date.....

GP - I confirm the medical history:

Practice stamp

Signature..... Date.....