

Client Services Policy Manual

Policy Number: **EN-04**
Subject: **Cardiac Conditions**
Chapter: **Entitlement**

Policy Statement

Cardiac conditions are compensable when the cardiac condition is established as arising out of and in the course of employment.

Cardiac conditions may be considered under any of the following circumstances:

1. Traumatic injury involving penetrating and non-penetrating injury to the chest wall.
2. Electric shock producing irregular cardiac rhythm.
3. Inhalation of smoke and various noxious gases and fumes.
4. Complication of treatment for a compensable injury, i.e. anaesthesia with an interval of hypotension or cardiac arrest.
5. Cor pulmonale associated with compensable chest disease.
6. Unusual physical exertion and/or acute emotional distress with no significant delay in the onset of symptoms. In this instance, the claim is allowed on the basis of an aggravation of a pre-existing non-compensable condition.

General

1. Temporary Disability

When a claim is accepted for a cardiac condition, the injured employee is entitled to full benefits for earnings loss and health care during the acute stage. In most instances, claims are considered on the basis of an aggravation of a pre-existing non-compensable condition, usually atherosclerotic heart disease.

2. Subsequent Cardiac Conditions

- a. When entitlement is established for a cardiac condition, there is no limitation of ongoing entitlement if the subsequent condition is related to the compensable cardiac condition.
- b. When entitlement is established for a cardiac condition, the condition has stabilized, and a permanent functional impairment evaluation has been conducted, further entitlement will not be granted for a subsequent cardiac condition unless there is a new work-related incident which

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would merit consideration of a new claim.

3. Permanent Functional Impairment

- a. A permanent functional impairment review may be carried out at the point of maximum recovery, usually 12 to 18 months after the acute occurrence. An assessment is arranged with an outside physician.
- b. Subsequent to a permanent functional impairment assessment, ongoing medical treatment is not compensable if a need for treatment arises for an underlying vascular disease which pre-existed the injury. An exception to this would be those cases where various surgical procedures - for example, coronary artery bypass - may be implemented in the acute phase of disability. Decisions regarding ongoing entitlement may be made in consultation with a WorkplaceNL medical consultant.

4. Fatal Claims

- a. If death occurs as a result of a cardiac condition, shortly after the initial onset, or while the condition is still in the acute phase, the claim may be accepted for full death benefits.
- b. If death occurs as a result of a new or progressive cardiac condition, the fatal claim is not accepted unless there is a new work related incident which would merit consideration of a new claim.

Exceptional Circumstances

In cases where the individual circumstances of a case are such that the provisions of this policy cannot be applied or to do so would result in an unfair or unintended result, WorkplaceNL will decide the case based on its individual merits and justice. Such a decision will be considered for that specific case only and will not be precedent setting.

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Reference: Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act, Sections 43 and 73

Amendment History

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