



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Veterans' Affairs**

**Policy Development Branch**

## SOP Bulletin No. 218

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**THE FOLLOWING RMA SOPs TAKE EFFECT ON 25 JANUARY, 2021**

<b>New SOPs</b>	<b>Hyperacusis</b>
<b>Revocations &amp; Replacements</b>	<b>Allergic contact dermatitis Irritant contact dermatitis Angle closure glaucoma Chronic venous insufficiency of the lower limb and varicose veins of the lower limb Dementia pugilistica Giant cell arteritis Psoriasis Psoriatic arthritis Acute infectious mononucleosis Anosmia Aortic aneurysm and aortic wall disorders Hereditary haemochromatosis Otitis externa</b>
<b>Amendments</b>	<b>Rotator cuff syndrome</b>

## NOTEWORTHY FEATURES

### Hyperacusis

**New – 27 & 28 of 2021**

- This new SOP covers a rare hearing disorder that involves an increased sensitivity to sound. This manifests as intolerance to sounds that don't disturb other people.
- SOP factors are quite similar to those for tinnitus, with loud noise exposure being the most common cause.
- Hyperacusis can be assessed more objectively than tinnitus, using a test similar to an audiogram to measure sound levels and frequencies at which discomfort occurs.

### Allergic contact dermatitis

**Revocation – 1 & 2 of 2021**

Replaces 112 & 113 of 2011

- The definition has been updated in form and also now explicitly covers skin exposure to airborne allergens (the previous requirement for “direct” contact has been removed).
- Allergic contact dermatitis (like other allergies) requires an initial sensitising exposure and then the condition is triggered by later re-exposure to the same (or possible a related) agent.
- The single SOP onset factor previously covered the sensitising exposure that may have occurred months or years before clinical onset. The new factor requires exposure within the two weeks before onset. This limits the factor to covering only the triggering exposure/re-exposure (unless both sensitisation and re-exposure have occurred within the two week period).
- The time frame for exposure for the worsening factor has been extended from five days to two weeks.
- A new example list has been added to the definition for allergens.

**Irritant contact dermatitis****Revocation – 3 & 4 of 2021**

Replaces 110 &amp; 111 of 2011

- As for allergic contact dermatitis, the updated SOP definition and factors now cover skin contact with airborne irritants (previously direct exposure was required).
- The sole onset and worsening factors retain the three day exposure window. The irritant definition now includes an example list and there is new note concerning irritant contact dermatitis from “wet work” (having wet hands frequently or for prolonged periods).

**Angle closure glaucoma****Revocation – 5 & 6 of 2021**

Replaces 25 &amp; 26 of 2012, as amended

- The definition has been recast to clarify that the SOP covers both chronic angle closure with progressive optic neuropathy (nerve damage) and acute angle closure episodes.
- A number of agents have been added to the specified drugs factor, and a new general (mode of action) drug factor has been added.
- The previous two eye surgery factors have been combined and there is a new factor for types of non-eye surgery.
- The (redundant) ionising radiation dose factor has been removed (the therapeutic radiation factor is retained).

**Chronic venous insufficiency of the lower limb  
and varicose veins of the lower limb****Revocation – 7 & 8 of 2021**Replaces 29 & 30 of 2012  
and 120 & 121 of 2011

- These previously separate SOPs have been combined into one instrument. Separate definitions have been retained. The venous insufficiency definition now has a list of included manifestations.
- Most of the factors were common to both previous SOPs and have been retained in the new SOP with little change in format.
- The factor for prolonged standing now has a note to clarify that being completely immobile/stationary throughout the specified period is not required.

- There is a new factor for tricuspid valve regurgitation, applying to both conditions and a further new factor for heart failure, applying to chronic venous insufficiency only.

<b>Dementia pugilistica</b>	<b>Revocation – 90 &amp; 10 of 2020</b> Replaces 11 & 12 of 2012
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- This SOP essentially covers chronic neurological impairment as a sequelae of professional boxing.
- There have been formatting updates but no material change to the definition or factors.

<b>Giant cell arteritis</b>	<b>Revocation – 11 &amp; 12 of 2021</b> Replaces 71 & 72 of 2012
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- The expanded definition now identifies giant cell arteritis as being an autoimmune condition and also includes a note that covers the commonly affected arteries and the clinical manifestations
- The only factors (smoking, onset and worsening) have an updated format, with a reduction in both the dose requirement and the maximum latency period.

<b>Psoriasis</b>	<b>Revocation – 13 &amp; 14 of 2021</b> Replaces 31 & 32 of 2012, as amended
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- The SOP definition has been reformatted but with no change in effect.
- The previous stem that was included for most of the SOP onset factors, “for a first episode of psoriasis only”, has been deleted, as it was thought to be redundant. Psoriasis can take a variety of clinical forms and can appear at different skin sites at different times. Clinical onset will be the first manifestation of psoriasis at any site. Later development of psoriasis at different sites or in different forms can be considered as possible clinical worsening of psoriasis.
- The various drug factors have been updated, with a number of new agents added and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (previously RH only) removed.

- For the stressor factors the maximum latency period (from time of stressor to disease) has been extended from 3 to 6 months.
- For smoking and passive smoking the cessation clause has been removed.

<b>Psoriatic arthritis</b>	<b>Revocation – 15 &amp; 16 of 2021</b> Replaces 5 & 6 of 2012
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- The name of the SOP has been changed (from psoriatic arthropathy).
- The injury/trauma factor now has a definition for trauma similar to that found in the osteoarthritis SOPs and elsewhere.
- The drugs factor now covers biologic agents (used for autoimmune disease and cancer therapy).

<b>Acute infectious mononucleosis</b>	<b>Revocation – 17 &amp; 18 of 2021</b> Replaces 3 & 4 of 2012
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- The definition has been updated but with no change in effect. Laboratory evidence of recent infection is still a requirement.
- The factor for immunosuppression has been removed. The only onset factor is for exposure to the virus.

<b>Anosmia</b>	<b>Revocation – 19 &amp; 20 of 2021</b> Replaces 118 & 119 of 2011
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- There are multiple new factors:
  - RH and BOP:
    - perennial allergic rhinitis; hepatic encephalopathy; chronic renal failure; therapeutic radiation; snake bite (by specified snakes); alcohol use disorder and alcohol-induced major neurocognitive disorder (as specified);
  - RH only:
    - diabetes mellitus; anorexia nervosa;

- Added to BOP (already in RH):
  - Vitamin B12 deficiency.
- A factor for nasal polyposis has been removed along with a BOP factor for pellagra.
- There have been changes to factors for fumes from metals and fumes from volatile substances, with a number of deletions for types of metals and substances from the associated lists.

## **Aortic aneurysm and aortic wall disease**

**Revocation – 21 & 22 of 2021**

Replaces 9 & 10 of 2012, as amended

- The name of the SOP has changed, with the addition of aortic wall disorders. Some of these aortic wall disorders were previously covered by now revoked SOPs for non-aneurysmal aortic atherosclerotic disease, but have been relocated to this SOP (symptomatic penetrating aortic ulcer, intramural haematoma, false aortic aneurysm, and aortic rupture). This SOP also newly covers aortic dissection and periaortic haematoma (both previously non-SOP).
- There are multiple new factors:
  - RH and BOP:
    - Low fruit and vegetable diet; fluoroquinolone antibiotics; HIV infection; non-aneurysmal aortic atherosclerotic disease;
  - RH only:
    - Obesity; solid organ transplant; chronic kidney disease;
  - For aortic wall disorders only (RH and BOP):
    - Pregnancy; strenuous physical activity; drugs of abuse; invasion by a malignant neoplasm; inflammation of a contiguous tissue or organ; SARS-CoV-2 infection (COVID 19).
- A factor for cystic medial necrosis (a pathological process) has been removed.
- A number of other factors have been reorganised/consolidated (but retained).

**Hereditary haemochromatosis****Revocation – 23 & 24 of 2021**

Replaces 21 &amp; 22 of 2012

- The name of the SOP has changed (“hereditary” added). This not material as the SOP was previously restricted to genetic disorders of iron metabolism. The reworked definition requires documented iron overload in organs or clinical evidence of iron-related organ or tissue dysfunction (and so, although this is a genetically-based disorder, clinical onset of the disease will not be until sufficient excess iron has accumulated to meet the above requirement).
- There are minor dose changes to the alcohol (worsening) factors.
- There is a new worsening factor (RH and BOP) for steatohepatitis.
- A previous (worsening) factor for chronic blood transfusion overload has been removed.

**Otitis externa****Revocation – 25 & 26 of 2021**

Replaces 58 &amp; 59 of 2012, as amended

- The definition has been expanded, with the addition of a list of included conditions and several notes, but no change in coverage.
- There is a new factor (RH and BOP) covering exposure to hot/humid weather or heavy rain.
- The (redundant) ionising radiation dose factor has been removed (the therapeutic radiation factor is retained).
- The previous specified conditions factor has been split into two separate factors for: inflammatory skin disease; and infectious, autoimmune or granulomatous disease.

**Rotator cuff syndrome****Amendment – 29 & 30 of 2021**

Amends 100 &amp; 101 of 2014

- The amendments are to the factors for:
  - using the upper limbs for transfer – this now covers using the upper limbs for weight bearing, including using crutches or other walking aids; and

- performing forceful activities with the affected upper limb – the associated definition for “forceful activities” now covers such activities involving the arm (not just the hand, as previously) and a new note explains that use of crutches, walking aids and manual wheelchairs are covered by “forceful activities”.

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