

Chemical exposure



Chemicals are everywhere. Exposure to these products is not always obvious. Furthermore, prolonged exposure can lead to changing symptoms as the chemical accumulates in the body.

Symptoms

Depending on the type of exposure, symptoms may include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Irritability
- Pain or burning in the eyes
- Seizures
- Rash, blisters, or skin burns
- Dizziness
- Nausea and/or vomiting

Examples of harmful chemicals:

- Arsenic
- Benzene
- Lead
- Highly hazardous pesticides
- Mercury
- Asbestos

What to do in the event of chemical exposure?

- Remove the person from the area of exposure. Avoid breathing vapors from the spilled substance.
- Alert people in the immediate area to evacuate.
- Wash skin contaminated by the chemical with running water for 15 minutes or more.
- If medical assistance is needed, call 911 immediately.



Prevention

Here are some prevention recommendations:

- Avoid prolonged exposure to chemicals, even at low levels.
- Store chemicals safely after use.
- Avoid using potentially toxic substances in the kitchen or near food.
- Chemicals should be stored out of the reach of children.
- Use paints, petroleum-based products, ammonia, bleach, and other items that may release fumes only in well-ventilated areas.
- Do not store household products in food or beverage containers. It is recommended to leave them in the original containers with the label intact.

Social and Emotional Aspects

For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can address the emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after your medical treatment, please visit your primary care physician or call the following phone lines:

Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

APS Health 787-641-9133

References:

<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000059.htm>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/photo-story/detail/10-chemicals-of-public-health-concern>

Prepared by Licensed Health Educators.

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