



Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Fact Sheet

Carbon monoxide, or CO, is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death. CO is found in combustion fumes, such as those produced by cars and trucks, small gasoline engines, stoves, lanterns, burning charcoal and wood, and gas ranges and heating systems. CO from these sources can build up in enclosed or semi-enclosed spaces. People and animals in these spaces can be poisoned by breathing it.

How can I prevent carbon monoxide poisoning?

Install and maintain carbon monoxide detectors in your home:

- Detectors can provide rapid carbon monoxide warnings to your family.
- Change batteries when recommended by manufacturers.
- Train your household to recognize and respond to a carbon monoxide alarm.

Understand the potential sources of carbon monoxide you have in your home.

- Gas stove tops, ovens, and other cooking appliances may be sources of carbon monoxide.
- Running vehicles produce carbon monoxide.
- Generators placed too close to a home can be a source of carbon monoxide.

NOTE: DO NOT USE YOUR GAS STOVE FOR THE PURPOSE OF HEATING YOUR HOME AS THIS IS A SOURCE OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING.

Know how to respond if you suspect dangerous levels of carbon monoxide in your home.

- Get fresh air immediately by leaving the home and opening doors and windows.
- Shut off the source of the carbon monoxide leak.
- Go to an emergency room and report that you may have been exposed to dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.

What are the warning signs of carbon monoxide poisoning?

At low levels you may experience:

- Shortness of breath
- Mild nausea
- Mild headaches

At moderate levels you may experience:

- Severe headaches
- Mental confusion
- Fainting

At high levels you may experience:

- Fainting

- Brain damage
- Death