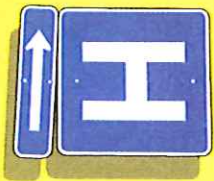


Symptoms

Symptoms can mimic a common cold, a hangover, food poisoning, depression or flu (without body ache or fever). If the family's (or pet's) symptoms decrease when away from the house, seek medical treatment or get a *carboxyhemoglobin level/blood test* for CO poisoning.



- Dizziness, ringing in the ears
- Blurred vision, burning eyes
- Persistent throbbing headaches
- Tightness across the forehead
- Pale skin
- Nausea and vomiting
- Confusion, disorientation, loss of muscle control
- Fainting, unconsciousness
- Sleepiness, never feeling rested
- Rapid heartbeat or pulse, fluttering or throbbing of the heart, tightening of the chest
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain (angina) when exercising
- Intoxicated appearance
- Sudden death



CO Poisoning is especially toxic to infants and children; mother and unborn child during pregnancy; the elderly; smokers; people with anemia, coronary, or respiratory problems; and people with immune system diseases.

CO Detectors

CO detectors sound an alarm when unacceptable levels of CO are in the air. Without testing instruments, CO is virtually impossible to detect.

- Look for UL-approval, standard 2034 detectors.
- Install detectors on every level of the home, in the vicinity of the heating unit, and in RVs.
- Be sure alarms can be heard from every sleeping area.
- Test the same way as smoke detectors. *CO detectors are NOT a substitute for smoke detectors.*

If The Alarm Sounds

Leave immediately even if you do not feel symptoms. Follow your home escape plan. Open doors and windows (on your way out).

Meet at pre-arranged meeting place, away from the home.

Call for help from another location.

Never re-enter the home until help arrives and the danger passes.



Who To Call For Help

For symptoms of CO poisoning call 9-1-1, your local fire department, or the local gas company's emergency number. Seek medical attention.

If alarm sounds and there are no symptoms, call a qualified appliance technician.

If a CO leak is suspected or you smell gas, call the local gas company immediately. Professionals can identify and eliminate the CO problem.



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401F

Carbon Monoxide

Is there a killer in your home?



National Fire Safety Council, Inc.

Carbon Monoxide

is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, highly toxic gas that is undetectable to the human senses. It is a by-product of combustion, present whenever fuel is burned from:

- kerosene
- wood
- coal
- oil
- charcoal
- gasoline
- propane
- methane
- diesel fuel
- natural or liquefied petroleum (LP) gas
- tobacco smoke

Because the gas is odorless, victims may become disoriented before realizing any danger, unable to call for help or exit the premises. CO displaces oxygen in the blood, causing the brain, heart, and other tissues, muscles and organs to become oxygen starved, a condition called *carboxyhemoglobin* or *COHb*.

Energy-efficient homes may be more susceptible to CO poisoning because they do not allow enough air in the home to dissipate normal CO output.

It is estimated that 300 deaths occur each year from CO poisoning and 10,000 people seek medical attention due to CO inhalation.



Outside The Home

Cars, outdoor equipment, recreational vehicles



- Never leave a vehicle running in a garage with or without the garage door open. Inspect for exhaust leaks.
- Never use fuel-burning heaters or lanterns while sleeping in tents, campers, RVs or other enclosed areas.
- Do not store propane tanks indoors.
- Start all gas-, diesel- or propane-powered equipment outside.
- Use paint strippers and solvents outdoors or in adequately ventilated areas.
- Even with the door open, never use a barbecue grill in the garage or house, in a trailer, van or camper.

Household Guidelines

Installation, maintenance, and operation of household devices to prevent formation of dangerous CO levels should include:

1. Installation by a professional according to manufacturer's instructions and local building codes.
2. Maintenance through yearly inspections to eliminate problems before they become hazardous.
3. Using proper fuel, operate according to manufacturer's directions.



Inside The Home

Furnace, fireplace, wood stove, water heater, space or portable heaters, appliances

- Avoid extensive use of kerosene heaters; always vent to outside.
- Inspect and service heating and cooling system before each season.
- Check water heater for improper burner adjustment and low supply of hot water.
- Keep fireplace flue open for adequate ventilation and until embers are completely burned out.
- If you see a mostly yellow pilot light not positioned upright, call for service; never adjust it yourself.
- Never install or operate gas-burning appliances, furnaces or water heaters in unvented enclosures.
- Examine chimney and vents for blockages, cracks, leaks; improper connections, rust, water streaking, stains; debris and soot; loose, damaged, discolored bricks or masonry; hot draft or none at all.
- Never use a gas range or oven for heating.



Things To Watch For

- Stuffy, stale, smelly air; exhaust fume smell; unfamiliar or burning odor
- Moisture on walls and windows; lint by dryer's exterior vent; soot on appliances
- A furnace that runs constantly but heats inadequately; loose or missing furnace panels
- Appliances that shut off, activating safety devices

