

Symptoms of CO poisoning

CO enters the body through breathing. CO poisoning can be confused with flu symptoms, food poisoning and other illnesses. Some symptoms include shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, light headedness or headaches.

High levels of CO can be fatal, causing death within minutes.

The concentration of CO, measured in parts per million (ppm) is a determining factor in the symptoms for an average, healthy adult.

CO concentration (parts per million)	Symptoms
50	No adverse effects with 8 hours of exposure.
200	Mild headache after 2-3 hours of exposure.
400	Headache and nausea after 1-2 hours of exposure.
800	Headache, nausea, and dizziness after 45 minutes; collapse and unconsciousness after 1 hour of exposure.
1,000	Loss of consciousness after 1 hour of exposure.
1,600	Headache, nausea, and dizziness after 20 minutes of exposure.
3,200	Headache, nausea, and dizziness after 5-10 minutes; collapse and unconsciousness after 30 minutes of exposure.
6,400	Headache and dizziness after 1-2 minutes; unconsciousness and danger of death after 10-15 minutes of exposure.
12,800	Immediate physiological effects, unconsciousness and danger of death after 1-3 minutes of exposure.

PREVENT CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

If the power goes out:

ONLY use a generator outdoors and far from open windows and vents.

NEVER use a generator indoors, in garages or carports.

NEVER cook or heat inside on a charcoal or gas grill.

What is carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas that cannot be seen or smelled and can kill a person in minutes. Carbon monoxide is produced whenever any fuel such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood, or charcoal is burned.

Hundreds of people die accidentally every year from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by appliances that are not used properly or that are malfunctioning. Carbon monoxide can build up so quickly that victims are overcome before they can get help.

Once inhaled, carbon monoxide:

Can cause permanent brain damage;

Can cause chest pains or heart attacks in people with heart disease.

What are the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning?

Headache

Dizziness

Fatigue

Weakness

Confusion

Nausea

How can I prevent carbon monoxide poisoning?

Never burn charcoal inside homes, tents, campers, vans, trucks, garages, or in mobile homes. Do not burn charcoal in the fireplace in your home.

Never use gasoline powered equipment indoors.

Never use a gas oven to heat your home, even for a short time.
Never idle a car in a garage, even when the garage door is open.
Never sleep in a room while using an invented gas or kerosene heater.
Make sure that chimneys and flues are in good condition and are not blocked.
Carbon monoxide warning devices may provide additional protection, but should not replace the other prevention steps.

What should be done if you suspect someone has been poisoned by carbon monoxide?

Move the person to a place with fresh air immediately.
Take the person to an emergency room and tell them that you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning.