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Chemical Emergencies

When a hazardous chemical has been released, it may harm people's health. Chemical releases can be unintentional, as in the case of an industrial accident. They could also be planned, as in the case of a terrorist attack with a chemical weapon.

Some hazardous chemicals have been developed by military organizations for use in warfare. Examples are nerve agents such as sarin and VX. Many hazardous chemicals are used in industry - for example, chlorine, ammonia, and benzene. Some can be made from everyday items such as household cleaners.

Although there are no guarantees of safety during a chemical emergency, you can take actions to protect yourself. You should have a disaster plan [<https://medlineplus.gov/disasterpreparationandrecovery.html>]. Being prepared can help reduce fear, anxiety, and losses. If you do experience a disaster, it is normal to feel stressed. You may need help in finding ways to cope [<https://medlineplus.gov/copingwithdisasters.html>].

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Learn More

- About Chemical Emergencies [<https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/about/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Chemical Emergency Preparedness [<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/chemical-emergency.html>] (American Red Cross)
- Chemical Fact Sheets [<https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/chemical-fact-sheets/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Chemical pneumonitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000143.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000143.htm>]
- Household Chemical Emergencies [<https://www.ready.gov/household-chemical-emergencies>] (Department of Homeland Security)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.ready.gov/es/emergencias-con-productos-quimicos-en-el-hogar>]
- Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) [<https://aspr.hhs.gov/SNS/Pages/default.aspx>] (Department of Health and Human Services)
- ToxGuides: Quick Reference Guide for Toxicological Profiles [<https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/ToxGuides/ToxGuidesLanding.aspx>] (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry)
- What to Do to Shelter in Place for a Chemical Emergency [<https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/response/shelter-in-place.html>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Accelerating countermeasure candidate discovery for A-series chemical warfare agent exposure. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40674422>]
- Article: Medical preparedness for bioterrorism and chemical warfare: A public health integration... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40324267>]

Article: Evaluation of dried blood spot sampling for verification of exposure to...
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40232631>]

- Chemical Emergencies -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Chemical+Warfare%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Chemical+Warfare+Agents%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Chemical+Terrorism%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+2+Years%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]



Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English [<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/chemicalemergencies.html>]
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