



[Home](#) → [Medical Encyclopedia](#) → Face powder poisoning

URL of this page: //medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002700.htm

Face powder poisoning

Face powder poisoning occurs when someone swallows or breathes in this substance.

This article is for information only. DO NOT use it to treat or manage an actual poison exposure. If you or someone you are with has an exposure, call the local emergency number (such as 911), or the local poison control center can be reached directly by calling the national toll-free Poison Help hotline (1-800-222-1222) from anywhere in the United States.

Poisonous Ingredient

The ingredients in face powder that can be harmful are:

- Baking soda
- Talcum powder
- Many other types of powder

Where Found

Face powder contains these ingredients.

Symptoms

Symptoms of face powder poisoning include:

- Abdominal pain
- Blurred vision
- Breathing difficulty
- Burning pain in the throat
- Burns to the eye, redness and tearing (if substance gets in the eye)
- Diarrhea (watery, bloody)
- Rash
- Vomiting

Home Care

Seek medical help right away. DO NOT make the person throw up unless poison control or a health care provider tells you to.

If the person swallowed face powder, give them water or milk right away, unless a provider tells you not to. DO NOT give anything to drink if the person has symptoms that make it hard to swallow. These include vomiting, convulsions, or a decreased level of alertness.

If the person breathed in the powder, move them to fresh air right away.

Before Calling Emergency

Have this information ready:

- Person's age, weight, and condition
- Name of the product (ingredients, if known)
- Time it was swallowed or inhaled
- Amount swallowed or inhaled

Poison Control

Your local poison control center can be reached directly by calling the national toll-free Poison Help hotline (1-800-222-1222) from anywhere in the United States. This national hotline will let you talk to experts in poisoning. They will give you further instructions.

This is a free and confidential service. All local poison control centers in the United States use this national number. You should call if you have any questions about poisoning or poison prevention. It does NOT need to be an emergency. You can call for any reason, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

What to Expect at the Emergency Room

Take the container with you to the hospital, if possible.

The provider will measure and monitor the person's vital signs, including temperature, pulse, breathing rate, and blood pressure. Symptoms will be treated.

The person may receive:

- Activated charcoal
- Blood and urine tests
- Breathing support, including a tube through the mouth into the lungs and a breathing machine (ventilator)
- Chest x-ray
- ECG (electrocardiogram, or heart tracing)
- Fluids through a vein (by IV)
- Laxatives

- Medicines to treat symptoms

If the poisoning is severe, the person may be admitted to the hospital.

Outlook (Prognosis)

How well someone does depends on how much face powder they swallowed and how quickly they receive treatment. The faster medical help is given, the better the chance for recovery.

Face powders are not very poisonous, so recovery is likely.

References

Kapil V, Bradberry SM, Pirmohamed M. Prescribing, therapeutics and toxicology. In: Feather A, Randall D, Waterhouse M, eds. *Kumar and Clark's Clinical Medicine*. 10th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier Limited; 2021:chap 12.

Kuschner WG, Blanc PD..Acute responses to toxic exposures. In: Broaddus VC, Ernst JD, King TE, et al, eds. *Murray & Nadel's Textbook of Respiratory Medicine*. 7th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2022:chap 103.

Meehan TJ. Care of the poisoned patient. In: Walls RM, ed. *Rosen's Emergency Medicine: Concepts and Clinical Practice*. 10th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2023:chap 135.

Review Date 11/2/2023

Updated by: Jesse Borke, MD, CPE, FAAEM, FACEP, Attending Physician at Kaiser Permanente, Orange County, CA. Also reviewed by David C. Dugdale, MD, Medical Director, Brenda Conaway, Editorial Director, and the A.D.A.M. Editorial team.

Learn how to cite this page



A.D.A.M., Inc. is accredited by URAC, for Health Content Provider (www.urac.org). URAC's [accreditation program](#) is an independent audit to verify that A.D.A.M. follows rigorous standards of quality and accountability. A.D.A.M. is among the first to achieve this important distinction for online health information and services. Learn more about A.D.A.M.'s [editorial policy](#), [editorial process](#), and [privacy policy](#).

Health Content
Provider
06/01/2028

The information provided herein should not be used during any medical emergency or for the diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. A licensed medical professional should be consulted for diagnosis and treatment of any and all medical conditions. Links to other sites are provided for information only – they do not constitute endorsements of those other sites. No warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, is made as to the accuracy, reliability, timeliness, or correctness of any translations made by a third-party service of the information provided herein into any other language. © 1997-2025 A.D.A.M., a business unit of Ebix, Inc. Any duplication or distribution of the information contained herein is strictly prohibited.

