

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

For Immediate Release

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless and tasteless gas produced by the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels such as wood, gas, oil or coal.

Exposure to CO in the home can cause flu-like symptoms that clear up after going outside or leaving the home. At low levels, healthy people may feel fatigue; people with heart disease may feel chest pain. At higher concentrations, symptoms include headache, nausea, dizziness, drowsiness, burning eyes, confusion and disorientation. High levels of CO may result in unconsciousness, brain damage or death.

If you experience any of the symptoms of CO, leave the home and move into fresh air as quickly as possible. If anyone in the home shows symptoms of CO poisoning they should seek medical attention immediately.

How can I protect myself?

- Install carbon monoxide detectors.
- Annually inspect all fuel-burning appliances.
- Operate outdoor appliances safely. Never operate propane barbeques indoors or in a garage.
- Never run an automobile inside a garage.

A CO detector can provide added protection, but is no substitute for proper use and upkeep of CO sources. No detector is 100% reliable, and some individuals may experience health problems at levels of CO below the detection sensitivity of these devices.

For more information about carbon monoxide detectors call your local fire department. For more information on the health effects of carbon monoxide, contact Jack Mormul or Shawn Telford-Eaton at the Peterborough County-City Health Unit at (705)743-1000.