



PUBLIC FACT SHEET

AMMONIA

What is ammonia?

Ammonia is a colorless gas with a strong odor. It also exists in a liquid form and is used in household and industrial cleaning solutions, as well as in fertilizers, explosives, pesticides, and other chemicals. It is not flammable but may explode if exposed to high heat.

- nausea
- vomiting
- chest pain
- wheezing
- difficulty breathing
- high dose
 - choking
 - fluid on the lungs
 - severe shortness of breath
 - possible death

What are possible methods of exposure?

- breathing ammonia fumes from cleaning products
- skin contact from chemical products containing ammonia
- fumes or skin contact from ammonia fertilizers
- industrial accidents involving leakage from tank trucks and rail cars

What are possible symptoms of ammonia exposure?

Skin contact:

- burns, particularly of the skin, eyes or mouth
- eye contact can lead to blindness

Inhalation:

- low dose
 - coughing
 - watery eye
 - runny nose
 - burning in the throat
 - headache

- moderate dose

How is ammonia detected?

Ammonia has a very strong odor which is usually noticed immediately.

What is the treatment for exposure to ammonia?

The best treatment is to immediately remove the person from the exposure area and wash off any liquid ammonia with large amounts of water. If the person has any of the serious symptoms noted above they should be taken immediately for medical treatment.

For more information on ammonia contact:

Ottawa County Health Department
www.mi.Ottawa.org

Center for Disease Control and Prevention
www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/ammonia/
Phone: (888) 246-2675