

What are the symptoms of CO poisoning?

Headaches, dizziness, lethargy, tiredness and nausea. One or more of these symptoms can easily be mistaken for 'flu and other common viruses, or even food poisoning. If one or more individuals in your household suffers from these symptoms while at home but feels fine elsewhere, they may be suffering from CO poisoning.

What should you do if you have symptoms?

If you think you are suffering from CO poisoning, get out into the fresh air immediately. Ventilate the premises and consult your doctor or go to a casualty department if the symptoms are serious.

Because these symptoms are so common, Carbon Monoxide poisoning can be misdiagnosed. If you feel Carbon Monoxide poisoning is a strong possibility, be assertive and tell the doctor or medical personnel of the circumstances surrounding your illness.

The only way to confirm Carbon Monoxide poisoning is by a specialised test. This may be done using a ToxCO breath test, or using a device called a Rad-57 CO-oximeter (a light probe placed on the finger – NOT the same as a normal pulse oximeter) or with a small blood sample (this is only available in hospitals). There is NO OTHER WAY of diagnosing CO poisoning.

Your measurable levels start to fall once you are breathing clean air, so you should get tested as soon as possible.



CO-Awareness supports victims, their families and friends poisoned by Carbon Monoxide (CO) while trying to raise awareness among health professionals and the general public, of the dangers of CO.

CO-Awareness is currently seeking volunteers to assist in a variety of duties, ranging from secretarial to publicity. Volunteers can be of any age and with varying amounts of time to spare.

If you would like to learn more about CO-Awareness, are patient and understanding and would like to help CO victims, then we would love to hear from you.

Our contact details are –
Call Lynn on 0771 589 9296
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www.co-awareness.co.uk

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Trust in us to help you understand the effects of Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning

www.co-awareness.co.uk

CO is the chemical symbol for carbon monoxide

What is CO poisoning?

Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning can be fatal or cause permanent damage. CO is produced as a result of the incomplete burning of carbon fuels. It has no odour or taste and, in large quantities, can kill very quickly.

Where does CO come from?

Any fuel-burning appliance that is not properly maintained can be a source of CO. Sources may include cookers, heaters, gas tumble dryers, hot water heaters and fireplaces. Danger signs of CO leakage include yellow or orange flames on your appliances where there should normally be a crisp blue one, and sooty stains on the walls around fires and water heaters.

You also risk being poisoned by CO if you share a wall or chimney with a house that has a potential source of CO, even if your own house does not have one.

Who is at risk of CO poisoning?

Anyone can be poisoned by CO. However, some individuals are more vulnerable than others. These include – young children, the elderly, students and also people with anaemia, and those with heart and lung diseases. Pregnant women risk foetal damage through exposure to Carbon Monoxide.

Use this list to do a basic check for CO leakage

1 Check the flame colour of your appliances. If it's orange there may be a problem. Whatever the colour, you should get your gas appliances checked annually.



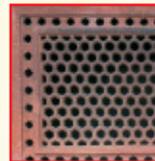
2 Is your chimney flue blocked? Do you have creeping plants growing up your outside walls? Do you have birds nesting in your chimney flue? Completely remove these obstructions from the flue area and then fit a guard to stop any birds nesting. It is very important to get your chimney flue checked.



3 Do you have an eye level gas grill? They can be particularly hazardous. Is yours working correctly? Older appliances can be problematic. Use the electric toaster instead. Get your cooker checked NOW!



4 Is there adequate ventilation? Check your airbrick. Have you double-glazing fitted? If the appliances in your home don't have enough air, they will produce Carbon Monoxide.



5 When were your appliances last checked? Do it every year. Don't leave it to chance. Only use a properly qualified engineer. Ask to see their ID card. They must be registered with BESCA (Solid Fuel & Oil) tel: 0800 652 5533, CORGI (Gas) tel: 0870 401 2300, HETAS Ltd (Solid Fuel) tel: 01462 634721, NAPIT (Solid Fuel & Oil) tel: 0870 444 1392 or OFTEC (Oil) tel: 0845 658 5080.



6 Do you suffer from any unexplained illness, such as fatigue, muscle pains, upset stomach, lethargy, dizziness and headaches? If so, go to your doctor and ask for a Carbon Monoxide test. Don't delay, because the Carbon Monoxide in your blood will deplete and may not be detected.



7 Are you a tenant? Do you have a safety certificate? Does your landlord annually check the appliances in your accommodation? (They must do this by Law.) Has your landlord fitted a Carbon Monoxide alarm? If you are a Landlord and are found guilty of neglect you may be fined or even sent to prison.



8 To protect yourself and your loved ones from the dangers of this silent killer, the most important thing you can do is to get a Carbon Monoxide alarm with a low level indicator. By fitting a Carbon Monoxide alarm you can at least be sure that having carried out all the safety checks, you are protected.

