

SODIUM AZIDE FACT SHEET

What is sodium azide?

Sodium azide is a fast acting fatal chemical that exists as an odorless white solid. When mixed with water or solid metals, it can be a toxic gas with a sharp odor. This chemical is found in a vehicle's airbags. CDC has not received any reports of sodium azide exposure following a vehicle airbag deployment. This chemical is also used in hospitals and laboratories as a preservative.

How you can be exposed to sodium azide?

You can be exposed to sodium azide by drinking water, eating food and breathing air contaminated by sodium azide.

How soon does an exposed person show symptoms?

The symptoms will depend on the route, amount and length of time of exposure to sodium azide.

What are the immediate symptoms?

If you are exposed to a small amount of sodium azide, you may exhibit symptoms of a fast heart rate, weakness, headache, nausea, vomiting, red eyes, nose drainage, skin burns and blisters. If exposed to a large amount of sodium azide, you may exhibit symptoms of seizures, low blood pressure, slow heart rate, loss of consciousness, lung injury and breathing problems leading to death.

What are the long-term health effects?

Survivors of serious sodium azide poisoning may have heart and brain damage.

What should you do if you think you have been exposed to sodium azide?

If you think you have been exposed, move quickly to an area where fresh air is available. Remove your clothing by cutting them off the body; if possible do not pull the clothes over your head. Quickly wash your entire body with large amounts of soap and water. If your eyes are burning or your vision is blurred, rinse them with plain water for 10 to 15 minutes. If you wear contacts, wash your hands after removing contaminated clothes and then remove the contacts before rinsing your eyes.

If you wear eye glasses, remove and wash them with soap and water. You can put your eyeglasses back on after you wash them. Place your contaminated clothes and contact lenses into a plastic bag and seal. Place the bag into a second plastic bag and seal. If sodium azide has been ingested, do not drink fluids or induce vomiting. **Call 911 for medical attention right away and removal of the contaminated items. Do not drive yourself to the hospital as you may become very ill on your way.**

Where you can get more information on sodium azide?

www.cdc.gov

www.dshs.state.tx.us

www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/rtkweb/rtkhsfs.htm

Source of information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)