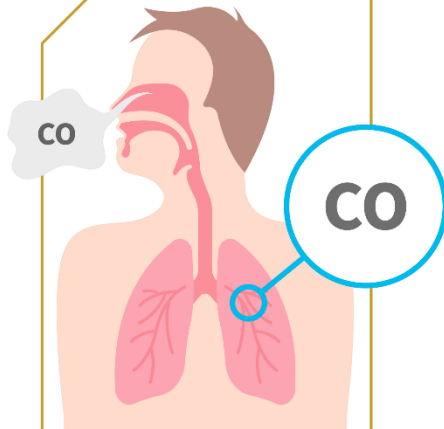




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Carbon Monoxide Poisoning



When am I at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning?

- While the weather is nice, Plenty people go to the desert to light campfires and inhale the smoke coming from the fire. This is dangerous due to the high amount of carbon monoxide.
- When using grills, camping stoves, heaters, etc., especially in enclosed areas, it may expose you to the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Hookah is a major contributor to carbon monoxide poisoning, especially if indoors.



Why is inhaling carbon monoxide so dangerous?

Carbon monoxide attaches to red blood cells easier and faster than oxygen, this means that the bodies' most vital organs (**the brain and the heart**) and deprived of oxygen.



What are the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning?

Symptoms vary depending on the poisoning severity:

- ❖ Headache or confusion.
- ❖ Nausea and vomiting.
- ❖ Dizziness and drowsiness.
- ❖ Coughing/choking, shortness of breath.
- ❖ Loss of consciousness.



What are the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning?

Loss of consciousness is a sign that the carbon monoxide poisoning is severe. The brain is starved of oxygen to the point where a hyperbaric oxygen therapy is the treatment. Another sign to be emphasized is the appearance of the lips, which are classically described as “cherry red”.

What should I do if I suspect carbon monoxide poisoning?

The quickest and easiest thing to do is to remove the person from the source of carbon monoxide (fire, grill, hookah lounge) and place him/her in an open area.

You will notice some improvement in the patient but it is better to bring them to the hospital.

What action will be taken in the hospital?

The first step is to ensure that the patient's condition is stable and then he is given 100% oxygen through a mask. The course of treatment depends on the severity and carbon monoxide source.

How do I know if a child is a victim of carbon monoxide poisoning?

Young children develop signs and symptoms much faster than they do in older children and adults. Symptoms in young children can only be discomfort and difficulty feeding. Symptoms in older children are similar to those of adults.



Resources and references:

All pictures used from [canva.com](https://www.canva.com)

Review and audit:

Content of this booklet has been reviewed by Emergency Medicine

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