

# Sources of CO Poisoning

- Gas-powered generators
- Charcoal grills, propane stoves, and charcoal briquettes for both cooking and heating indoors
- Motor vehicles
- Fire
- Boats
- Power washers and other gas powered tools.
- Gas appliances.

## How to Recognize CO Poisoning:

The symptoms and signs of carbon monoxide poisoning are variable and nonspecific. The most common symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and altered mental status.

There are over 400 deaths and 50,000 emergency department visits a year in the U.S. from Carbon Monoxide exposure.

Remember if you suspect a poisoning emergency, call your local poison center immediately at

**1-800-222-1222.**

### Pittsburgh Poison Center

200 Lothrop Street  
PFG 01-01-01  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Phone: 1-800-222-1222  
Email: MrYuk@upmc.edu

Sources:

Retrieved April 20, 2020 from  
<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/cofacts.html>

Pittsburgh Poison Center

**CARBON  
MONOXIDE  
POISONING**

*Poison Prevention*



**1-800-222-1222**

# Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless, poisonous gas that can cause sudden illness and death if present in sufficient concentration in the ambient air.

When power outages occur during emergencies such as hurricanes or winter storms, the use of alternative sources of fuel or electricity for heating, cooling, or cooking can cause CO to build up in a home, garage, or camper and poison the people and animals inside.

Generators, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning devices should never be used inside a home, basement, garage, or camper – or even outside near an open window or window air conditioner.

Gas appliances such as furnaces, dryers and hot water heaters can cause CO toxicity if they malfunction or are not vented properly.



**For outdoor use only**

## Important CO Poisoning Prevention Tips

- Always have a battery-powered or battery back-up CO detector in your home. Check or replace the battery when you change the time on your clocks each fall and spring.
- Never use a gas range or oven to heat a home.
- Never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked in an enclosed or partially enclosed space, such as a garage.
- Never use a generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine inside your home, basement, or garage or less than 20 feet from any window, door, or vent. Use an extension cord that is **more than 20 feet long** to keep the generator at a safe distance.
- Never run a generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine inside a basement, garage, or other enclosed structure, even if the doors or windows are open, unless the equipment is professionally installed and vented. Keep vents and flues free of debris, especially if winds are high. Flying debris can block ventilation lines.

- Never use a charcoal grill, hibachi, lantern, or portable camping stove inside a home, tent, or camper.
- If conditions are too hot or too cold, seek shelter with friends or at a community shelter.

If Carbon Monoxide poisoning is suspected, call your local Poison Center at **1-800-222-1222**. If someone becomes unresponsive or stops breathing, call **911** immediately.



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