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# Carbon monoxide safety

More than 15,000 people are treated for unintentional exposure to carbon monoxide and more than 25 children ages 0 – 14 die from unintentional poisoning every year in the United States. In fact, carbon monoxide, or CO, is the leading cause of unintentional poisoning-related deaths across all age groups.

Carbon monoxide is dangerous because it's a colorless and odorless gas. It's produced by generators, portable heaters, stoves, fireplaces, water heaters and other items that burn fuel.

## **CO poisoning symptoms**

Symptoms often are mistaken for the flu and include headache, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, confusion, dizziness and blurred vision. In severe cases, a person may lose consciousness or die.

If a CO leak is suspected get out as quickly as possible. Call 911 or the fire department from outside your house.

## **Protect your child from carbon monoxide poisoning**

### **Follow these tips to help prevent CO poisoning in your home**

- Install a CO detector near every sleeping area and on every floor of the house. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for exact placement as this may vary.
- If your CO detector is a plug-in model, make sure it has a battery backup.
- Test alarms every month and replace batteries twice a year.
- Vacuum the alarm cover once a month to remove accumulated dust. Do not use chemicals or detergents to clean the unit as they could cause permanent damage.
- Do not paint the unit.
- CO detectors need to be replaced every five to seven years. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for life expectancy of your particular detector.
- Have all fuel-burning appliances inspected each year by a technician to ensure they are working properly.
- Be sure to have chimneys cleaned and inspected yearly for proper ventilation.
- Never use a stove to heat your living space.
- Never use a grill, generator or camp stove inside your home, garage or near a window.
- Do not leave a car running in a garage. Even if the garage door is open, CO can build up quickly. If the garage is attached, it may seep into the house.

Color  
the items that  
**produce** carbon  
monoxide!

