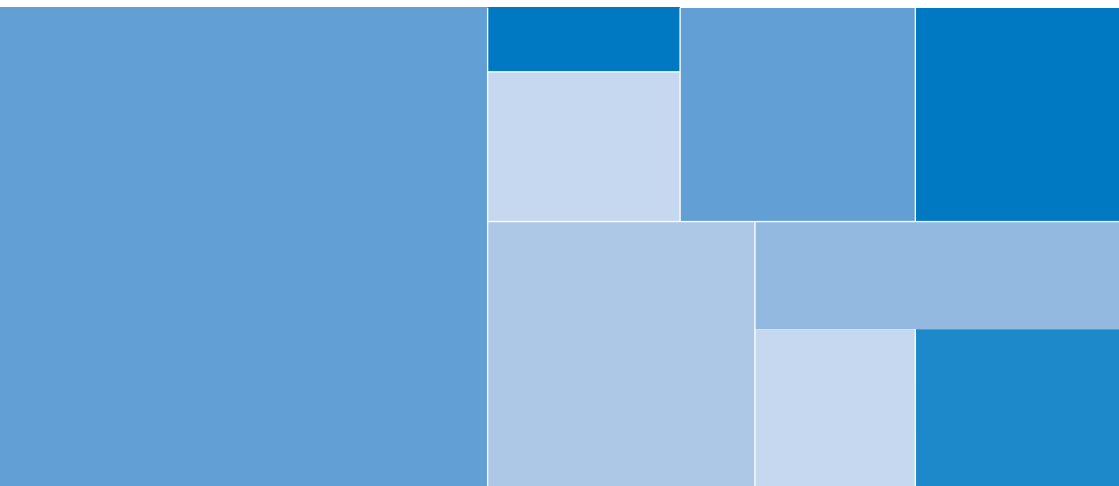


# Indoor air pollution – Carbon monoxide

Risks to health and how to avoid them



Air pollution can be a problem indoors as well as outside and it can affect your health. There are many potential sources of air pollution indoors – this leaflet tells you about one important pollutant, Carbon Monoxide, a lethal gas.

## **Carbon monoxide**

**Accidental exposure** to carbon monoxide kills more than 50 people each year in England and Wales. It is a colourless and odourless gas produced when gas or other fossil fuels burn without enough air. Incorrectly installed, poorly maintained or poorly ventilated cooking and heating devices are the main sources.

**Headaches, tiredness**, difficulty in thinking clearly and feeling sick are common symptoms. Young people's academic work may deteriorate. If you suffer from these symptoms see your doctor at once and call an engineer to check ALL your cooking and heating appliances.

## **Preventing Poisoning**

1. Have all gas and other fossil fuel appliances installed and serviced regularly by trained, reputable and preferably registered engineers.
2. Make sure that all rooms are well ventilated when an appliance is being used.
3. Do not use gas cookers for heating.
4. Do not sleep in a bedroom with a paraffin heater or an unflued gas fire.
5. Fit a carbon monoxide alarm that meets British or European Standards.

**Remember: Carbon monoxide poisoning can resemble food poisoning, viral infections or flu**

## **Seven rules for safety**

1. **DO NOT** use poorly maintained appliances that burn gas or other fossil fuels. Have all appliances serviced regularly by a trained, reputable and preferably registered engineer and make sure chimneys and flues are clean and not blocked.
2. Fit a carbon monoxide alarm that meets British or European Standards.
3. Never use unflued appliances in small closed-up rooms.
4. Do not use gas appliances if they produce yellow flames and deposit soot on walls and fireclay radiants.
5. Fit an extractor fan in your kitchen.\* A kitchen full of cooking fumes is dangerous.
6. For work on all appliances always employ a qualified, reputable and preferably registered engineer.
7. For work on gas appliances always employ a suitably qualified engineer who is registered with the Council for Registered Gas Installers (CORGI).

**Remember: Carbon monoxide can KILL**

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\* This should only be done if your kitchen does not have an open-flued heating appliance working into a chimney.

## Finding out more...

### Gas:

HSE Gas Safety Line: 0800 300 363

Website: [www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/index.htm)

CORGI helpline: 0870 401 2300

Website: [www.corgi-group.com](http://www.corgi-group.com)

### Solid fuel:

Solid Fuel Association (SFA) helpline: 0845 601 4406

Website: [www.solidfuel.co.uk](http://www.solidfuel.co.uk)

Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme (HETAS)

Website: [www.hetas.co.uk](http://www.hetas.co.uk)

### Carbon monoxide:

NHS Direct

Website: [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

CO-Gas Safety

Website: [www.co-gassafety.co.uk](http://www.co-gassafety.co.uk)

### Indoor air pollution:

Department of Health

Website: [www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/comeap/](http://www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/comeap/)

**Ask your doctor for advice if you feel ill**

**KEEP WARM – KEEP SAFE**

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This leaflet may also be viewed on the Department of Health website:

[www.dh.gov.uk/airpollution](http://www.dh.gov.uk/airpollution)

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