



AMMONIA (NH₃)

What is AMMONIA?

Ammonia is an industrial chemical used in agriculture and industry. It is a clear gas with a strong odor, which usually provides an adequate warning of its presence. It dissolves easily in water to form ammonium hydroxide. Breathing in large amounts can be fatal.

Signs and Symptoms:

Ammonia is very irritating to the eyes, nose, throat and lungs. It can cause a burning sensation in the eyes, swelling of the throat and airways, coughing, and fluid accumulation in the lungs. Patients may have difficulty breathing, possibly resulting in respiratory distress or death. High amounts may cause severe eye injury and burns of the skin. Liquid ammonia can cause frostbite. Swallowing ammonia can burn the mouth, throat and stomach.

Exposure:

Inhalation, ingestion, skin or eye exposure.

What can you do?

Emergency response leaders may direct people to evacuate or "shelter in place."

Treatment:

There is no antidote. Remove contaminated clothing immediately and wash exposed skin/eyes. Supportive hospital care is often necessary.

Diagnosis:

Based on known or suspected exposure.

Whom do you call?

Delaware Division of Public Health: 1-888-295-5156.

For more information:

Visit the CDC website for Emergency Preparedness and Response: www.bt.cdc.gov