

# Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

## **What is carbon monoxide?** (abbreviated CO)

- Odorless, tasteless, colorless gas found in fumes, smoke, and fire.
- Breathing it can kill you.

## **How does it kill you?**

- Displaces oxygen in the bloodstream, kills bloodcells, and damages vital organs.

## **Where does it come from?**

- Most anything that burns; e.g., wood, coal, gasoline, plastic, paper, cloth
- Sources include furnaces, water heaters, clothes dryers, motor vehicles, stoves, grills, and small gasoline engines.

## **When & where is greatest risk for poisoning?**

- Enclosed areas
- Poorly-ventilated areas
- Smoke inhalation during a fire.

## **What are signs of CO poisoning?**

- Flu-like symptoms – headache, fatigue, dizziness
- Vision problem
- Rapid breathing
- Chest pain
- Irregular heartbeat

## **How soon might poisoning occur?**

- At high levels, death can occur within minutes
- Long-term exposure at low levels will slowly accumulate adverse effects

## **What is the treatment for CO poisoning?**

- Oxygen and/or medication
- Hyperbaric chamber for very high levels of CO

## **How do we prevent poisoning?**

- Install CO alarms, particularly near where you sleep
- Never use charcoal grills indoors
- Heating unit, fireplace, and chimney should be inspected each year
- Do not leave car running inside an attached garage
- Do not use oven to heat your home

## **What do I do in event of CO emergency?**

- If you believe you're exposed to CO – *move to fresh air and call 9-1-1*
- If your CO alarm is sounding – *move to fresh air and call 9-1-1*

For further information, call Fire Marshal Jay Bender 201-794-5408  
at the Fair Lawn Fire Prevention Bureau [FireMarshal@FairLawn.org](mailto:FireMarshal@FairLawn.org)