

## Together for Resilient Youth January 2020 TIP

### Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning Prevention - What Everyone Should Know



**CO poisoning is entirely preventable. Protect yourself and your family by learning the symptoms of CO poisoning and how to prevent it.**

When winter temperatures plummet and home heating systems run for hours the risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning increases.

Every year, at least 430 people die in the U.S. from accidental CO poisoning. Approximately 50,000 people in the U.S. visit the emergency department each year due to accidental CO

poisoning. There are steps you can take to help protect yourself and your household from CO poisoning. CO is found in fumes produced by furnaces, kerosene heaters, vehicles “warmed up” in garages, stoves, lanterns, and gas ranges, portable generators, or by burning charcoal and wood. CO from these sources can build up in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. People and animals in these spaces can be poisoned and can die from breathing CO.

#### **How to Recognize CO Poisoning**

The most common symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. People who are sleeping or who have been drinking alcohol can die from CO poisoning before ever having symptoms.

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#### **CO Poisoning Prevention Tips**

- Change the batteries in your CO detector every six months. If you don’t have a battery-powered or battery back-up CO detector, buy one soon.
- Have your heating system, water heater and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- Keep vents and flues free of debris. Debris can block ventilation lines.
- Never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked in an enclosed or partially enclosed space, such as a garage.
- Never run a motor vehicle, generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine less than 20 feet from an open window, door, or vent where exhaust can vent into an enclosed area.
- Never use a charcoal grill, hibachi, lantern, or portable camping stove inside a home, tent, or camper.
- 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.
- If you suspect CO poisoning, call 911 or a health care professional right away.

**CO poisoning is entirely preventable.** You can protect yourself and your family by learning the symptoms of CO poisoning and how to prevent it.

Citation: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/copoisoning/index.html>  
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