



District Health Department No. 2

Northeast Michigan's Community Health Department

SOMAN

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

What is Soman?

Soman is a human-made chemical warfare agent classified as a nerve agent. Nerve agents are the most toxic and rapidly acting of known chemical warfare agents. Soman is a tasteless, odorless, clear liquid with a slight camphor odor (similar to vapor rub).

How Can People Be Exposed to Soman?

Following a release of Soman into the air, people can be exposed through skin contact, eye contact, or inhalation. Soman also mixes easily with water so it is possible that it could be used as a poison through the water.

What Are The Symptoms of Soman?

Individuals who are exposed to a low or moderate dose of soman by inhalation, ingestion, or skin absorption may experience some or all of the following symptoms within seconds to a few hours after exposure: runny nose, watery eyes, small pupils, eye pain, blurred vision, drooling and excessive sweating, cough, chest tightness, rapid breathing, diarrhea, increased urination, confusion, drowsiness, weakness, headache, nausea/vomiting, slow or fast heart rate, and abnormally high or low blood pressure. A large dose of Soman may lead to loss of consciousness, convulsions, paralysis, and respiratory failure leading to death.

What are the Long-term Effects of Soman Exposure?

Mild or moderately exposed people usually recover completely. Severely exposed people are not likely to survive.

Can Soman Be Treated?

Treatment consists of removing Soman as soon as possible and providing supportive medical care in a hospital setting. Antidotes are available for Soman. They are most useful if given as soon as possible after exposure.

For more information on Soman, please visit the Center's for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov or call District Health Department #2 at 1-800-504-2650.