

TABUN FACT SHEET

What is tabun?

Tabun is a man-made chemical warfare agent classified as a nerve agent. Tabun was originally developed as a pesticide in Germany. This nerve agent is a clear, colorless, tasteless liquid with a faint fruity odor. It can be vaporized if heated.

How you can be exposed to tabun?

If released into the air as a vapor, you can be exposed through inhalation, skin or eye contact. You can be exposed through touching or drinking the contaminated water, if it is released into the water. If the food is contaminated with tabun, you can be exposed. A person's clothing can release tabun for about 30 minutes after contact with tabun vapor and expose other people.

How soon does an exposed person show symptoms?

The symptoms will appear within a few seconds after exposure to the vapor form of tabun or up to 18 hours after exposure to the liquid form. Once exposed this nerve agent will cause toxic effects by disrupting the body's "off switch" for glands and muscles. If there is no "off switch", the glands and muscles are constantly being stimulated which may lead to the inability to breathe.

What are the immediate symptoms?

Tabun is hard to notice due to its faint and fruity odor. If you are exposed to low or moderate amounts of tabun through inhaling, ingesting, or by skin contact, the following symptoms may occur within seconds to hours: runny nose, teary eyes, blurred vision, drooling, a lot of sweating, cough, chest tightness, fast breathing, diarrhea, drowsiness, increased urination, confusion, weakness, headaches, vomiting, nausea, slow or fast heart beat and low or high blood pressure. If exposed to a large amount of tabun, you may experience loss of consciousness, seizures, paralysis and inability to breathe that may lead to death.

What are the long-term health effects?

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

What should you do if you think you have been exposed to tabun?

It is possible to recover from tabun exposure if an antidote is available and used quickly.

If you think you have been exposed, move quickly to an area where fresh air is available. Remove your clothing by cutting them off the body; if possible do not pull the clothes over your head. Quickly wash your entire body with large amounts of soap and water. If your eyes are burning or your vision is blurred, rinse them with plain water for 10 to 15 minutes. If you wear contacts, wash your hands after removing contaminated clothes and then remove the contacts before rinsing your eyes.

If you wear eye glasses, remove and wash them with soap and water. You can put your eyeglasses back on after you wash them. Place your contaminated clothes and contact lenses into a plastic bag and seal. Place the bag into a second plastic bag and seal. If tabun has been ingested, do not drink fluids or induce vomiting. **Call 911 for medical attention right away and removal of the contaminated items. Do not drive yourself to the hospital as you may become very ill on your way.**

Where you can get more information on tabun?

www.bt.cdc.gov

www.dshs.state.tx.us

www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/rtkweb/rtkhsfs.htm

Source of information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)