

## How to Work Safely with

# How to Work Safely with - Hazardous Products using the "Health Hazard" Pictogram

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## What does this pictogram mean?



The symbol within the pictogram is a black silhouette of a person's head and chest with a white star shape spreading out from the center of the chest. This symbol indicates that hazardous products with this pictogram can cause certain health effects for example:

- carcinogenicity,
- specific target organ effects following single or repeated exposure, or
- reproductive toxicity.

Hazardous products with this pictogram can be safely worked with if proper storage and handling practices are followed.

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## Which hazard classes use the health hazard pictogram?

This pictogram is used by several hazard classes in the health hazard group.

The hazard classes and categories that are assigned this pictogram are:

- Respiratory sensitization - Category 1, Category 1A, and Category 1B
- Germ cell mutagenicity – Category 1 and Category 2
- Carcinogenicity – Category 1 and Category 2
- Reproductive toxicity – Category 1 and Category 2
- Specific Target Organ Toxicity – single exposure (STOT – single) – Category 1 and Category 2\*
- Specific Target Organ Toxicity – repeated exposure (STOT – repeated) – Category 1 and Category 2
- Aspiration hazard – Category 1

\*For the STOT - single hazard class, Category 3 is assigned the exclamation mark pictogram.

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## What are the hazards of products that have the health hazard pictogram?

This pictogram is used for a number of very different health hazards, which can result in serious health issues. The health effects may not be obvious right away. Long term health effects such as carcinogenicity (cancer-causing) or respiratory sensitization are included.

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## What signal words and hazard statements are used?

The WHMIS 2015 signal words and hazard statements for the hazard classes and categories assigned this pictogram are:

Hazard Class and Category	Signal Word	Hazard Statement
Respiratory sensitization – all categories	Danger	May cause allergy or asthma symptoms or breathing difficulties if inhaled
Germ cell mutagenicity – Category 1	Danger	May cause genetic defects*
Germ cell mutagenicity – Category 2	Warning	Suspected of causing genetic defects*
Carcinogenicity – Category 1	Danger	May cause cancer*
Carcinogenicity – Category 2	Warning	Suspected of causing cancer*
Reproductive toxicity – Category 1	Danger	May damage fertility or the unborn child*+
Reproductive toxicity – Category 2	Warning	Suspected of damaging fertility or the unborn child*+
STOT – single – Category 1	Danger	Causes damage to organs*#
STOT – single – Category 2	Warning	May cause damage to organs*#
STOT – repeated – Category 1	Danger	Causes damage to organs through repeated or prolonged exposure*#
STOT – repeated – Category 2	Warning	May cause damage to organs through repeated or prolonged exposure*#
Aspiration hazard – Category 1	Danger	May be fatal if swallowed and enters airways

\* the route of exposure (if inhaled, in contact with skin, if swallowed) may be stated if it is conclusively proven that no other routes of exposure cause the hazard

+ the specific reproductive effect (effects on fertility or effects on the unborn child) may be stated, if known

# all target organs (e.g., liver, kidneys, blood, nervous system) affected may be stated, if known

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Are there other hazards associated with products with the health hazard pictogram?

In addition to the specific hazards identified by the health hazard pictogram, it is important to remember that a product may have other hazards, for example:

- other **health hazards** such as acute toxicity, skin corrosion, serious eye damage, skin irritation or eye irritation
- **physical hazards** such as flammability, reactivity or corrosive to metals.

ALWAYS check the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and label for the product that you are working with to ensure that you know what is being used and all of the hazards and precautions associated with the product. Ask questions if you are not sure.

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## How can products with the health hazards pictogram be handled safely?

- ALWAYS Check the SDS for information about ALL of the hazards and the necessary precautions for the product being used. Ask questions if you are not sure.
- If it is not possible to eliminate use of the hazardous product in your workplace, evaluate whether it is possible to [substitute](#) it with a less hazardous product.
- Prevent uncontrolled release of these products into the air (e.g., dust, mist, vapour). In some cases, closed systems may be required.
- Use only in [well-ventilated](#) areas.
- Work with the smallest amount possible.
- Inspect all containers for damage or leaks before handling. Keep containers tightly closed when not in use or empty.
- For respiratory sensitizers:
  - Avoid breathing dust, fumes, gas, mist, vapours or spray.
  - In case of inadequate ventilation, wear respiratory protection.
- For germ cell mutagens, carcinogens and reproductive toxins:
  - Obtain special instructions before use.
  - Do not handle until all safety precautions have been read and understood.
  - Wear protective gloves, protective clothing, eye protection and/or face protection, as required.

- For STOT-single and/or STOT-repeated hazards:
    - Do not breathe dust, fumes, gas, mist, vapours or spray.
    - Wash hands and skin after handling.
    - Do not eat, drink or smoke when using these products.
  - Keep work surfaces clean. Wipe up spills. Prevent accumulation of dust or other forms of residue. Prevent contamination of surfaces that unprotected personnel may use.
  - Avoid repeated or long-term skin contact with product.
  - Do not reuse empty containers – hazardous residue could remain inside.
  - Immediately report leaks, spills or failures of the safety equipment (e.g., ventilation system). In the event of a spill or leak, exit the area immediately.
  - Maintenance personnel need to know the possible hazards of the products they might be exposed to.
  - If personal protective equipment (PPE) is required, the employer must ensure that workers are thoroughly trained in its selection, fit, use and maintenance. Refer to the SDS for guidance on selection.
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## How can products with the health hazard pictogram be stored safely?

- Inspect containers and storage area regularly for signs of leakage or damage.
  - Store in the original, labelled, shipping container.
  - Keep amount in storage to an absolute minimum.
  - Keep products cool and dry, in a well-ventilated area and away from direct sunlight. Post warning signs.
  - Restrict access to authorized personnel only. Consider locked storage.
  - Keep away from incompatible materials. Check the SDS for specific information.
  - Store the product on shelves closest to floor level (avoid storage above eye level). Do not store on high cabinets or shelves.
  - Keep containers closed. Keep in closed containers with tight-fitting lids.
  - Empty containers may contain hazardous residue. Store separately. Keep closed.
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## What should I do in case of an emergency?

- Understand and practice emergency procedures so that you know what to do if it becomes necessary.
- Ensure that eyewash and emergency shower are readily available in the immediate work area. These devices must be tested regularly.
- Have spill control procedures and equipment ready (e.g., absorbent spill control materials, PPE etc.).
- Immediately report leaks to your supervisor, warn people in the area, and move to a safe location, if necessary.
- Be aware of the typical symptoms of exposure and appropriate first aid procedures. Any signs of illness should be reported immediately to your supervisor.
- For when a respiratory sensitizer is inhaled, remove person to fresh air and keep comfortable for breathing. If experiencing respiratory symptoms, call a poison centre or doctor.
- For germ cell mutagens, carcinogens, reproductive hazards and STOT-repeated hazards, get medical advice or attention if exposed or concerned.
- For STOT-single hazards, call a poison centre or doctor if exposed or concerned. Specific treatment may be required.
- For aspiration hazards, immediately call a poison centre or doctor if swallowed. Do not induce vomiting.

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