

Arsenic

Risks and Prevention

- ARSENIC IS A NATURALLY OCCURRING ELEMENT FOUND IN THE ENVIRONMENT (ROCK, SOIL, AND WATER SOURCES)
- ADDED TO SOME PESTICIDES, HERBICIDES, AND WOOD PRESERVATIVES
- INORGANIC ARSENIC IS CONSIDERED MORE HARMFUL THAN ORGANIC ARSENIC



Hazardous to Health?



Arsenic is carcinogenic and neurotoxic.



Short-term exposure to very high doses of arsenic can result in shock and death following abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhoea, renal failure, and delirium.

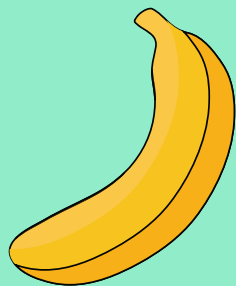


Long-term exposure to inorganic arsenic has been linked with skin, lung, bladder, kidney, and liver cancer as well as muscle cramps, weakness, and numbness or pain in the hands and feet.

How Am I Exposed?



Arsenic may be found in drinking water, Health Canada has set a guideline of no more than 0.01 mg/L



Fruits, vegetables, and grains grown in soil that is arsenic rich or has been previously treated with arsenic containing pesticides or fertilizers

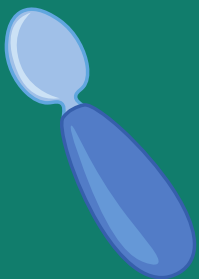


Rice and rice products often have a higher arsenic content than other foods as rice absorbs arsenic more easily than other grains.

Child Considerations



May be at increased risk due to small size and long lives ahead



Diet during infancy may be a source of arsenic exposure. Rice-based baby cereals should be used in moderation



Do not allow children to play in areas that may have arsenic in the soil

Child Considerations



Avoid smoking, as exposure may occur through tobacco smoke



Rice cereals should be fed to infants in moderation



Encourage children to wash their hands after playing outside, especially if they have been using wooden structures that may have been treated with CCA