



Vinyl Chloride

Quick Facts

- Vinyl chloride is a man-made, industrial chemical used to make polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic products.
- People may be exposed to vinyl chloride in indoor air if vapors enter from contaminated soil or groundwater below homes or buildings. This is called vapor intrusion.
- Breathing vinyl chloride may increase the risk of liver cancer.

What is Vinyl Chloride?

Vinyl chloride is a man-made, industrial chemical used to make PVC plastic products. It can get into the environment from spills at industrial sites, improper disposal of waste, and the breakdown of other chemicals like trichloroethylene (TCE) and tetrachloroethylene (PCE).

How could I be exposed to Vinyl Chloride?

- Vinyl chloride vapors can get into your home if it is found under a building or in contaminated soil or groundwater below the building.
- Breathing vinyl chloride vapors from nearby factories that make and use vinyl chloride, hazardous waste sites, and landfills.

How can Vinyl Chloride affect my health?

- Long term exposure to vinyl chloride may increase a person's risk of liver cancer and cause other changes in the liver.
- Animal studies suggest that infants and young children might be at higher risk of cancers caused by vinyl chloride than adults.
- Animal studies also suggest that vinyl chloride might affect growth and development in children.
- Not everyone will get sick from breathing vinyl chloride vapors. Chemicals affect people in different ways. If you have health concerns, talk to your doctor about your possible exposure to vinyl chloride.

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Is there a test to find out if someone has been exposed to Vinyl Chloride?

While there is a test, it may not tell you how much you were exposed to because:

- It takes only about a day for most of the vinyl chloride that you breathe in to leave your body, so tests done days after exposure will not tell you how much you were exposed to.
- Tests are not normally available at your doctor's office.

What if I've been exposed to Vinyl Chloride?

- If you have health concerns, talk to your doctor about medical tests that may be appropriate for you.
- If you have one of the health problems listed on this fact sheet, it does not mean that you've been exposed to this chemical.

Want to know more?

To learn more about Vinyl Chloride in your community, contact

For more information from MDHHS, call 1-800-648-6942.

Information in this fact sheet is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

ToxFAQs™ for Vinyl Chloride

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- If vinyl chloride is found in your body, it does not mean that current health problems were caused by vinyl chloride or that it will cause health problems in the future.

How can families lower their risk of exposure to Vinyl Chloride?

If vinyl chloride has been found at your home, follow advice from public health officials from your local public health department or the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).