

# Keeping Safe at Home

## Carbon Monoxide



An EasyRead Guide



## What is carbon monoxide?



Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas.

You cannot smell carbon monoxide and you cannot taste it.



If you breathe it in it can make you very poorly and sometimes even kill you.



So it is important to have carbon monoxide detectors in your home.

## What causes carbon monoxide?



Carbon monoxide is made when fuel like gas, oil, coal and wood don't burn properly.



Lots of things that you might have in your house use gas, oil, coal and wood to make them work.



Things like boilers, gas fires, central heating and cookers.

If they are not fitted properly or they are old and not looked after they might leak carbon monoxide.



Carbon monoxide poisoning can make you very ill. If you breathe in a lot you can die.



It can be hard to know if you have a leak because it does not smell.



The longer that you breathe it in the worse you will get.

So it is very important to make sure you are as safe as possible from carbon monoxide poisoning.



The most common sign of carbon monoxide poisoning is a tension type headache. This is when you feel like you have something tight around your head.



You might also feel dizzy, feel sick and be sick, be tired, have a tummy ache and find it hard to breathe.



The longer that you breathe in the carbon monoxide the worse your symptoms will be.



You might lose your balance, might not be able to see and you may even lose consciousness.

## How to try and stop carbon monoxide leaks



Look in your home for anything that might leak carbon monoxide.



Make sure that they have been fitted by a registered engineer.

Make sure they are serviced every year by a registered engineer.



Never try to fit or service them yourself.

## Safety tips



Never use your oven to heat your home.



Do not use really big pots or pans on your gas stove. Never put foil around the burners.



Make sure you get enough fresh air in your rooms. Do not block any air vents.



Get an extractor fan in your kitchen. Make sure it is fitted by a registered engineer.

What to do if you think you have a leak.



Stop using all your appliances and switch them off.



Open doors and windows to let fresh air in.

Leave the house and try to stay calm.

Call the gas emergency number 0800 111 999.



Do not go back into your house until you've been told it's safe to do so.



See a doctor as soon as possible.



It is a really good idea to have a carbon monoxide detector.



You put them near any appliances that might leak and an alarm will sound if they do.



You can buy them from DIY shops.

Some warning signs of carbon monoxide leaks are:



You feel ill every time you go into the same room and other people in your house feel the same as you when they go in.



You get more headaches when you use your heating.



The flames are yellow or orange instead of blue on your boiler.

There are sooty stains around your boiler or fire.



The pilot light on your boiler goes out a lot.



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