



RICIN

information

Ricin is a poison that can be made from the waste left over from processing castor beans. It can be in the form of a powder, a mist, or a pellet, or it can be dissolved in water or weak acid. It would take a deliberate act to make ricin and use it to poison people. Accidental exposure to ricin is highly unlikely. People can breathe in ricin mist or powder and be poisoned. Ricin can also get into water or food and then be swallowed. Ricin poisoning is not contagious. It cannot be spread from person to person through casual contact.

symptoms

Effects of ricin poisoning depend on whether ricin was inhaled, ingested, or injected. Death from ricin poisoning could take place within 36 to 72 hours of exposure, depending on the route of exposure (inhalation, ingestion, or injection) and the dose received. **Inhalation:** respiratory distress (difficulty breathing), fever, cough, nausea, and tightness in the chest. **Ingestion:** vomiting and diarrhea may become bloody. Severe dehydration may be the result, followed by low blood pressure. Other signs or symptoms may include hallucinations, seizures, and blood in the urine.

what to do

First, get fresh air. Remove your clothing. Wash yourself. Dispose your clothes. For more information about cleaning your body and disposing of your clothes after a chemical release, see <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/planning/personalcleaningfacts.asp> If someone has ingested ricin, do not induce vomiting or give fluids to drink. Seek medical attention right away. Dial 911 and explain what has happened.