



CASE DEFINITION

Sodium Azide

Clinical description

The majority of exposures to sodium azide occur by inhalation. Signs and symptoms of sodium azide poisoning include lethargy or coma (possibly sudden collapse), dyspnea, tachypnea, tachycardia, and hypotension. Nausea and vomiting also might occur, especially after ingestion. Exposure to dust or gas might produce conjunctivitis and nasal and bronchial irritation. Nonspecific laboratory findings include metabolic and lactic acidosis (1-2).

Laboratory criteria for diagnosis

- *Biologic*: A case in which sodium azide in serum is detected, as determined by a commercial laboratory.
- - OR -
- *Environmental*: Detection of sodium azide in environmental samples, as determined by FDA.

Case classification

- *Suspected*: A case in which a potentially exposed person is being evaluated by health-care workers or public health officials for poisoning by a particular chemical agent, but no specific credible threat exists.
- *Probable*: A clinically compatible case in which a high index of suspicion (credible threat or patient history regarding location and time) exists for sodium azide exposure, or an epidemiologic link exists between this case and a laboratory-confirmed case.
- *Confirmed*: A clinically compatible case in which laboratory tests have confirmed exposure.

The case can be confirmed if laboratory testing was not performed because either a predominant amount of clinical and nonspecific laboratory evidence of a particular chemical was present or a 100% certainty of the etiology of the agent is known.

Additional resources

1. Hitt JM. Automobile airbag industry toxic exposures. In: Sullivan JB Jr, Krieger GR, eds. Hazardous materials toxicology: clinical principles of environmental health. Baltimore, MD: Williams & Wilkins; 1992:533-6.
2. Ellenhorn MJ, Schonwald S, Ordog G, Wasserberger J, eds. Explosives. In: Ellenhorn's medical toxicology: diagnosis and treatment of human poisoning. 2nd ed. Baltimore, MD: Williams & Wilkins; 1997:1363-94.

This document is based on CDC's best current information. It may be updated as new information becomes available. For more information, visit www.bt.cdc.gov/chemical, or call CDC at 800-CDC-INFO (English and Spanish) or 888-232-6348 (TTY).

March 10, 2005

Page 1 of 1