Chlorine Gas

What is chlorine gas?
Chlorine gas comes from chlorine, a common chemical used in factories, labs, and in some household products. When liquid chlorine mixes with air, it turns into chlorine gas.

What does chlorine gas look like?
• It is yellow-green and has a strong smell, like bleach, and
• It stays close to the ground and spreads fast.

How would I come into contact with chlorine gas?
You could have contact with chlorine gas if:
• You mix household bleach with other cleaning products,
• There is an industrial accident, or
• Terrorists release chlorine gas into the air.

Is chlorine gas dangerous?
Yes. Chlorine gas is a poison. If you breathe it, you could die.

What are the symptoms?
Large amounts of chlorine gas can quickly cause:
• Burning in your nose, throat, and eyes
• Pain, redness, and blisters on your skin
• Watery eyes, blurry vision
• Coughing and trouble breathing
• Nausea and vomiting
With smaller amounts of chlorine gas, the symptoms may show up later.

Will I die from breathing chlorine gas?
It depends on how much gas you breathe. If you survive, you will have to stay in the hospital for treatment.

What if I think I was exposed to chlorine gas?

• Move away.
• Take off your clothes, shoes and glasses or contacts. Try not to pull your clothes over your head. There may be chlorine on them. Cut them off instead.
  • Wash or rinse yourself. Use lots of soap, if available.
  • Rinse your eyes with water for 10 to 15 minutes, if they are burning. You can wear your glasses again if you wash them. Do not use your contacts again.
  • Call 911 to get medical help right away!

Then do these things:
• Put your contaminated clothes and contacts in a plastic bag and seal it. (Protect your hands with rubber gloves or plastic bags.) Put the bag inside another plastic bag and seal it.
• Tell the emergency team where you left the bag.

For more information…
Call CDC (Centers for Disease Control) for information in English:
  800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636)
  888-232-6348 (TTY)
Or visit: www.bt.cdc.gov/chemical
  www.dhs.ca.gov/epo