



MUSTARD AGENTS

What are MUSTARD AGENTS?

Mustard agents are also known as blister agents. Common names include sulfur mustard, lewisite, nitrogen mustard and mustard lewisite. Sulfur mustards are yellow to brown oily liquids with a slight garlic, onion, or mustard odor. They may have no odor. Vapors can reach hazardous levels during warm weather. Mustard agents are considered chemical warfare agents.

Exposure:

Primary route is by either inhalation or absorption through the skin or eyes.

Signs and symptoms:

Depends on route and amount of exposure. Signs and symptoms include skin redness, itching and blistering, watering and swollen eyes, irritated nose and throat, possible toxic infection (sepsis), shortness of breath, and nausea and vomiting. Inhalation damages the lungs and airway and may cause death. Contact may cause permanent damage.

What can you do?

Emergency response leaders may direct people to evacuate, or “shelter in place.” If you are in an area where mustard was released, leave the area immediately and get to higher ground.

Treatment:

Remove contaminated clothing immediately and wash exposed skin and eyes. Supportive hospital care is often necessary.

Diagnosis:

Based on known or suspected exposure.

Whom do you call?

Division of Public Health: 1-888-295-5156.

For more information:

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/>.

Emergency Medical Services and Preparedness Section
24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156
Contact Number: 302-223-2999

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