

**TOXICOLOGICAL PROFILE FOR
ARSENIC**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry**

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DISCLAIMER

The use of company or product name(s) is for identification only and does not imply endorsement by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

UPDATE STATEMENT

Toxicological profiles are revised and republished as necessary, but no less than once every three years. For information regarding the update status of previously released profiles, contact ATSDR at:

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FOREWORD

This toxicological profile is prepared in accordance with guidelines* developed by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The original guidelines were published in the *Federal Register* on April 17, 1987. Each profile will be revised and republished as necessary.

The ATSDR toxicological profile succinctly characterizes the toxicologic and adverse health effects information for the hazardous substance described therein. Each peer-reviewed profile identifies and reviews the key literature that describes a hazardous substance's toxicologic properties. Other pertinent literature is also presented, but is described in less detail than the key studies. The profile is not intended to be an exhaustive document; however, more comprehensive sources of specialty information are referenced.

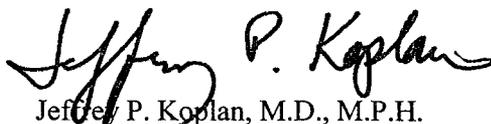
The focus of the profiles is on health and toxicologic information; therefore, each toxicological profile begins with a public health statement that describes, in nontechnical language, a substance's relevant toxicological properties. Following the public health statement is information concerning levels of significant human exposure and, where known, significant health effects. The adequacy of information to determine a substance's health effects is described in a health effects summary. Data needs that are of significance to protection of public health are identified by ATSDR and EPA.

Each profile includes the following:

- (A) The examination, summary, and interpretation of available toxicologic information and epidemiologic evaluations on a hazardous substance to ascertain the levels of significant human exposure for the substance and the associated acute, subacute, and chronic health effects;
- (B) A determination of whether adequate information on the health effects of each substance is available or in the process of development to determine levels of exposure that present a significant risk to human health of acute, subacute, and chronic health effects; and
- (C) Where appropriate, identification of toxicologic testing needed to identify the types or levels of exposure that may present significant risk of adverse health effects in humans.

The principal audiences for the toxicological profiles are health professionals at the Federal, State, and local levels; interested private sector organizations and groups; and members of the public.

This profile reflects ATSDR's assessment of all relevant toxicologic testing and information that has been peer-reviewed. Staff of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other Federal scientists have also reviewed the profile. In addition, this profile has been peer-reviewed by a nongovernmental panel and was made available for public review. Final responsibility for the contents and views expressed in this toxicological profile resides with ATSDR.



Jeffrey P. Koplan, M.D., M.P.H.
Administrator

Agency for Toxic Substances and
Disease Registry

*Legislative Background

The toxicological profiles are developed in response to the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) of 1986 (Public law 99-499) which amended the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA or Superfund). This public law directed ATSDR to prepared toxicological profiles for hazardous substances most commonly found at facilities on the CERCLA National Priorities List and that pose the most significant potential threat to human health, as determined by ATSDR and the EPA. The availability of the revised priority list of 275 hazardous substances was announced in the *Federal Register* on November 17, 1997 (62 FR 61332). For prior versions of the list of substances, see *Federal Register* notices dated April 29, 1996 (61 FR 18744); April 17, 1987 (52 FR 12866); October 20, 1988 (53 FR 41280); October 26, 1989 (54 FR 43619); October 17, 1990 (55 FR 42067); October 17, 1991 (56 FR 52166); October 28, 1992 (57 FR 48801); and February 28, 1994 (59 FR 9486). Section 104(i)(3) of CERCLA, as amended, directs the Administrator of ATSDR to prepare a toxicological profile for each substance on the list.

QUICK REFERENCE FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Toxicological Profiles are a unique compilation of toxicological information on a given hazardous substance. Each profile reflects a comprehensive and extensive evaluation, summary, and interpretation of available toxicologic and epidemiologic information on a substance. Health care providers treating patients potentially exposed to hazardous substances will find the following information helpful for fast answers to often-asked questions.

Primary Chapters/Sections of Interest

Chapter 1: Public Health Statement: The Public Health Statement can be a useful tool for educating patients about possible exposure to a hazardous substance. It explains a substance's relevant toxicologic properties in a nontechnical, question-and-answer format, and it includes a review of the general health effects observed following exposure.

Chapter 2: Health Effects: Specific health effects of a given hazardous compound are reported by *route of exposure*, by *type of health effect* (death, systemic, immunologic, reproductive), and by *length of exposure* (acute, intermediate, and chronic). In addition, both human and animal studies are reported in this section.

NOTE: Not all health effects reported in this section are necessarily observed in the clinical setting. Please refer to the Public Health Statement to identify general health effects observed following exposure.

Pediatrics: Four new sections have been added to each Toxicological Profile to address child health issues:

Section 1.6	How Can Arsenic Affect Children?
Section 1.7	How Can Families Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Arsenic?
Section 2.7	Children's Susceptibility
Section 5.6	Exposures of Children

Other Sections of Interest:

Section 2.8	Biomarkers of Exposure and Effect
Section 2.11	Methods for Reducing Toxic Effects

ATSDR Information Center

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E-mail: atsdric@cdc.gov **Internet:** <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov>

The following additional material can be ordered through the ATSDR Information Center:

Case Studies in Environmental Medicine: Taking an Exposure History—The importance of taking an exposure history and how to conduct one are described, and an example of a thorough exposure history is provided. Other case studies of interest include *Reproductive and Developmental Hazards*; *Skin Lesions and Environmental Exposures*; *Cholinesterase-Inhibiting Pesticide Toxicity*; and numerous chemical-specific case studies.

Managing Hazardous Materials Incidents is a three-volume set of recommendations for on-scene (prehospital) and hospital medical management of patients exposed during a hazardous materials incident. Volumes I and II are planning guides to assist first responders and hospital emergency department personnel in planning for incidents that involve hazardous materials. Volume III—*Medical Management Guidelines for Acute Chemical Exposures*—is a guide for health care professionals treating patients exposed to hazardous materials.

Fact Sheets (ToxFAQs) provide answers to frequently asked questions about toxic substances.

Other Agencies and Organizations

The National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) focuses on preventing or controlling disease, injury, and disability related to the interactions between people and their environment outside the workplace. *Contact:* NCEH, Mailstop F-29, 4770 Buford Highway, NE, Atlanta, GA 30341-3724 • Phone: 770-488-7000 • FAX: 770-488-7015.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) conducts research on occupational diseases and injuries, responds to requests for assistance by investigating problems of health and safety in the workplace, recommends standards to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), and trains professionals in occupational safety and health. *Contact:* NIOSH, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20201 • Phone: 800-356-4674 or NIOSH Technical Information Branch, Robert A. Taft Laboratory, Mailstop C-19, 4676 Columbia Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45226-1998 • Phone: 800-35-NIOSH.

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) is the principal federal agency for biomedical research on the effects of chemical, physical, and biologic environmental agents on human health and well-being. *Contact:* NIEHS, PO Box 12233, 104 T.W. Alexander Drive, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 • Phone: 919-541-3212.

Referrals

The Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics (AOEC) has developed a network of clinics in the United States to provide expertise in occupational and environmental issues. *Contact:* AOEC, 1010 Vermont Avenue, NW, #513, Washington, DC 20005 • Phone: 202-347-4976 • FAX: 202-347-4950 • e-mail: aoec@dgs.dgsys.com • AOEC Clinic Director: <http://occ-env-med.mc.duke.edu/oem/aoec.htm>.

The American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) is an association of physicians and other health care providers specializing in the field of occupational and environmental medicine. *Contact:* ACOEM, 55 West Seegers Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60005 • Phone: 847-228-6850 • FAX: 847-228-1856.

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THE PROFILE HAS UNDERGONE THE FOLLOWING ATSDR INTERNAL REVIEWS:

1. Health Effects Review. The Health Effects Review Committee examines the health effects chapter of each profile for consistency and accuracy in interpreting health effects and classifying end points.
2. Minimal Risk Level Review. The Minimal Risk Level Workgroup considers issues relevant to substance-specific minimal risk levels (MRLs), reviews the health effects database of each profile, and makes recommendations for derivation of MRLs.
3. Data Needs Review. The Research Implementation Branch reviews data needs sections to assure consistency across profiles and adherence to instructions in the Guidance.

PEER REVIEW

A peer review panel was assembled for arsenic. The panel consisted of the following members:

1. Celia Evans, Exponent, Inc. 15375 SE 30th Place, Suite 250, Bellevue, Washington 98007;
2. Nicolas Bloom, Frontier Geosciences, 414 Pontius North "B", Seattle, Washington 98109; and
3. Ingeborg Harding-Barlow, Private Consultant, 3717 Laguna Ave., Palo Alto, California 94306.

These experts collectively have knowledge of arsenic's physical and chemical properties, toxicokinetics, key health end points, mechanisms of action, human and animal exposure, and quantification of risk to humans. All reviewers were selected in conformity with the conditions for peer review specified in Section 104(I)(13) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, as amended.

Scientists from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) have reviewed the peer reviewers' comments and determined which comments will be included in the profile. A listing of the peer reviewers' comments not incorporated in the profile, with a brief explanation of the rationale for their exclusion, exists as part of the administrative record for this compound. A list of databases reviewed and a list of unpublished documents cited are also included in the administrative record.

The citation of the peer review panel should not be understood to imply its approval of the profile's final content. The responsibility for the content of this profile lies with the ATSDR.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	v
QUICK REFERENCE FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS	vii
CONTRIBUTORS	ix
PEER REVIEW	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
LIST OF TABLES	xix
1. PUBLIC HEALTH STATEMENT	1
1.1 WHAT IS ARSENIC?	1
1.2 WHAT HAPPENS TO ARSENIC WHEN IT ENTERS THE ENVIRONMENT?	2
1.3 HOW MIGHT I BE EXPOSED TO ARSENIC?	3
1.4 HOW CAN ARSENIC ENTER AND LEAVE MY BODY?	5
1.5 HOW CAN ARSENIC AFFECT MY HEALTH?	6
1.6 HOW CAN ARSENIC AFFECT CHILDREN?	8
1.7 HOW CAN FAMILIES REDUCE THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO ARSENIC?	9
1.8 IS THERE A MEDICAL TEST TO DETERMINE WHETHER I HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO ARSENIC?	11
1.9 WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS HAS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MADE TO PROTECT HUMAN HEALTH?	11
1.10 WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?	12
2. HEALTH EFFECTS	15
2.1 INTRODUCTION	15
2.2 DISCUSSION OF HEALTH EFFECTS BY ROUTE OF EXPOSURE	15
2.2.1 Inhalation Exposure	19
2.2.1.1 Death	19
2.2.1.2 Systemic Effects	32
2.2.1.3 Immunological and Lymphoreticular Effects	39
2.2.1.4 Neurological Effects	40
2.2.1.5 Reproductive Effects	41
2.2.1.6 Developmental Effects	41
2.2.1.7 Genotoxic Effects	43
2.2.1.8 Cancer	43
2.2.2 Oral Exposure	48
2.2.2.1 Death	48
2.2.2.2 Systemic Effects	104
2.2.2.3 Immunological and Lymphoreticular Effects	115
2.2.2.4 Neurological Effects	115
2.2.2.5 Reproductive Effects	116
2.2.2.6 Developmental Effects	117
2.2.2.7 Genotoxic Effects	119

2.2.2.8	Cancer	120
2.2.3	Dermal Exposure	128
2.2.3.1	Death	128
2.2.3.2	Systemic Effects	130
2.2.3.3	Immunological and Lymphoreticular Effects	131
2.2.3.4	Neurological Effects	131
2.2.3.5	Reproductive Effects	131
2.2.3.6	Developmental Effects	131
2.2.3.7	Genotoxic Effects	132
2.2.3.8	Cancer	132
2.3	TOXICOKINETICS	132
2.3.1	Absorption	133
2.3.1.1	Inhalation Exposure	133
2.3.1.2	Oral Exposure	134
2.3.1.3	Dermal Exposure	136
2.3.2	Distribution	137
2.3.2.1	Inhalation Exposure	137
2.3.2.2	Oral Exposure	137
2.3.2.3	Dermal Exposure	138
2.3.2.4	Other Routes of Exposure	139
2.3.3	Metabolism	139
2.3.4	Elimination and Excretion	142
2.3.4.1	Inhalation Exposure	142
2.3.4.2	Oral Exposure	142
2.3.4.3	Dermal Exposure	143
2.3.4.4	Other Routes of Exposure	143
2.3.5	Physiologically Based Pharmacokinetic (PBPK)/Pharmacodynamic (PD) Models	143
2.3.5.1	Summary of PBPK Models	145
2.3.5.2	Arsenic PBPK Model Comparison	145
2.3.5.3	Discussion of Models	147
2.4	MECHANISMS OF ACTION	161
2.4.1	Pharmacokinetic Mechanisms	161
2.4.2	Mechanisms of Toxicity	162
2.4.3	Animal-to-Human Extrapolations	163
2.5	RELEVANCE TO PUBLIC HEALTH	164
2.6	ENDOCRINE DISRUPTION	190
2.7	CHILDREN'S SUSCEPTIBILITY	190
2.8	BIOMARKERS OF EXPOSURE AND EFFECT	194
2.8.1	Biomarkers Used to Identify or Quantify Exposure to Arsenic	195
2.8.2	Biomarkers Used to Characterize Effects Caused by Arsenic	198
2.9	INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CHEMICALS	199
2.10	POPULATIONS THAT ARE UNUSUALLY SUSCEPTIBLE	201
2.11	METHODS FOR REDUCING TOXIC EFFECTS	201
2.11.1	Reducing Peak Absorption Following Exposure	202
2.11.2	Reducing Body Burden	203
2.11.3	Interfering with the Mechanism of Action for Toxic Effects	204
2.12	ADEQUACY OF THE DATABASE	204
2.12.1	Existing Information on Health Effects of Arsenic	205
2.12.2	Identification of Data Needs	208
2.12.3	Ongoing Studies	217

3. CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL INFORMATION	227
3.1 CHEMICAL IDENTITY	227
3.2 PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL PROPERTIES	227
4. PRODUCTION, IMPORT, USE, AND DISPOSAL	237
4.1 PRODUCTION	237
4.2 IMPORT/EXPORT	239
4.3 USE	239
4.4 DISPOSAL	241
5. POTENTIAL FOR HUMAN EXPOSURE	243
5.1 OVERVIEW	243
5.2 RELEASES TO THE ENVIRONMENT	246
5.2.1 Air	246
5.2.2 Water	250
5.2.3 Soil	251
5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL FATE	252
5.3.1 Transport and Partitioning	252
5.3.2 Transformation and Degradation	256
5.3.2.1 Air	256
5.3.2.2 Water	256
5.3.2.3 Soil	258
5.4 LEVELS MONITORED OR ESTIMATED IN THE ENVIRONMENT	259
5.4.1 Air	259
5.4.2 Water	260
5.4.3 Soil	266
5.4.4 Other Environmental Media	269
5.5 GENERAL POPULATION AND OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE	275
5.6 EXPOSURES OF CHILDREN	285
5.7 POPULATIONS WITH POTENTIALLY HIGH EXPOSURES	290
5.8 ADEQUACY OF THE DATABASE	291
5.8.1 Identification of Data Needs	293
5.8.2 Ongoing Studies	295
6. ANALYTICAL METHODS	301
6.1 BIOLOGICAL MATERIALS	301
6.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES	306
6.3 ADEQUACY OF THE DATABASE	307
6.3.1 Identification of Data Needs	307
6.3.2 Ongoing Studies	312
7. REGULATIONS AND ADVISORIES	313
8. REFERENCES	325
9. GLOSSARY	423

APPENDICES

A.	ATSDR MINIMAL RISK LEVELS AND WORKSHEETS	A-1
B.	USER'S GUIDE	B-1
C.	ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND SYMBOLS	C-1

LIST OF FIGURES

2-1. Levels of Significant Exposure to Inorganic Arsenic - Inhalation	25
2-2. Levels of Significant Exposure to Organic Arsenic - Inhalation	30
2-3. Levels of Significant Exposure to Inorganic Arsenic - Oral	78
2-4. Levels of Significant Exposure to Organic Arsenic - Oral	98
2-5. Conceptual Representation of a Physiologically Based Pharmacokinetic (PBPK) Model for a Hypothetical Chemical Substance	146
2-6. Parameters Used in the Mann PBPK Model for Animals	152
2-7. Parameters Used in the Mann PBPK Model for Humans	156
2-8. Parameters Used in the Yu PBPK Model for Animals	160
2-9. Existing Information on Health Effects of Inorganic Arsenic	206
2-10. Existing Information on Health Effects of Organic Arsenic	207
5-1. Frequency of NPL Sites with Arsenic Contamination	245
5-2. Counties in Which at Least 10% of Wells Exceed Different Arsenic Levels	262
5-3. Fish and Wildlife Advisories for Arsenic	292

LIST OF TABLES

2-1. Levels of Significant Exposure to Inorganic Arsenic - Inhalation	20
2-2. Levels of Significant Exposure to Organic Arsenic - Inhalation	28
2-3. Levels of Significant Exposure to Inorganic Arsenic - Oral	49
2-4. Levels of Significant Exposure to Organic Arsenic - Oral	86
2-5. Levels of Significant Exposure to Inorganic Arsenic - Dermal	127
2-6. Parameters Used in the Mann PBPK Model for Animals	148
2-7. Tissue Affinity Constants (K_{ij}) Obtained for the Mann PBPK Model for Animals by Fitting for Rabbits and Hamsters	149
2-8. Metabolic Rate Constants for the Mann PBPK Model for Animals Obtained by Fitting for Rabbits and Hamsters	150
2-9. Fitted Gastrointestinal Tract and Lung Absorption Half-time for the Hamster for the Mann PBPK Model	151
2-10. Physiological Data Used in the Mann PBPK Model for Humans	154
2-11. Tissue Affinity Constants (K_{ij}) Obtained by Fitting the Mann PBPK Animal Model for Use with Humans	155
2-12. Parameters Used in the Yu PBPK Model	159
2-13. Genotoxicity of Inorganic Arsenic <i>In Vivo</i>	177
2-14. Genotoxicity of Inorganic Arsenic <i>In Vitro</i>	179
2-15. Genotoxicity of Organic Arsenic	186
2-16. Ongoing Studies on Health Effects of Arsenic, Federally Funded	218
2-17. Ongoing Studies on Health Effects of Arsenic with Industry, Foreign, and Other Agency Funding	222
3-1. Chemical Identity of Arsenic and Selected Inorganic Arsenic Compounds	228
3-2. Chemical Identity of Selected Organic Arsenic Compounds	230
3-3. Physical and Chemical Properties of Arsenic and Selected Inorganic Arsenic Compounds	232
3-4. Physical and Chemical Properties of Selected Organic Arsenic Compounds	234

4-1. Facilities that Manufacture or Process Arsenic	238
5-1. Releases to the Environment from Facilities that Manufacture or Process Arsenic and Its Compounds	247
5-2. Regional Occurrence of Arsenic in U.S. Water Sources and Finished Drinking Water	264
5-3. Levels of Arsenic in Fish and Shellfish—Recent Studies	270
5-4. Estimated Mean Daily Intake of Inorganic Arsenic	276
5-5. Mean Daily Dietary Intake of Arsenic for Selected Population Groups	277
5-6. Levels of Arsenic in Human Tissue and Urine—Recent Studies	280
5-7. Ongoing Studies on Arsenic	296
6-1. Analytical Methods for Determining Arsenic in Biological Samples	303
6-2. Analytical Methods for Determining Arsenic in Environmental Samples	308
7-1. Regulations and Guidelines Applicable to Arsenic	317