TOXICOLOGICAL PROFILE FOR
IONIZING RADIATION

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

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DISCLAIMER

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UPDATE STATEMENT

A Toxicological Profile for Ionizing Radiation, Draft for Public Comment, was released in February 1998. This edition supersedes any previously released draft or final profile.

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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Atlanta, Georgia 30333
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.

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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 prepare 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 3: Summary of Health Effects of Ionizing Radiation: Specific health effects of ionizing radiation 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: Three new sections have been added to this Toxicological Profile to address child health issues:

Section 1.6 How Can Ionizing Radiation Affect Children?
Section 1.7 How Can Families Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Ionizing Radiation?
Section 3.2.2 Children’s Susceptibility

Other Sections of Interest:
Section 3.2.1.4 Teratogenic/Embryotoxic Effects
Section 3.2.3 Carcinogenic Effects from Ionizing Radiation Exposure

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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: aoecc@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.
PEER REVIEW

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

1. Herman Cember, Ph.D., CHP, Consultant, Lafayette, IN;
2. Richard Toohey, Ph.D., CHP, Consultant, Oak Ridge, TN;
3. Kenneth Mossman, Ph.D., Professor, Scottsdale, AZ;
4. John Poston, Ph.D., Professor, College Station, TX; and
5. Darrell Fisher, Ph.D., Senior Scientist, Richland, WA.

These experts collectively have knowledge of ionizing radiation'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 IONIZING RADIATION? ............................................................ 1
   1.2 HOW DOES RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL ENTER AND SPREAD THROUGH THE
       ENVIRONMENT? ....................................................................................... 7
   1.3 HOW MIGHT I BE EXPOSED TO IONIZING RADIATION? ...................... 9
   1.4 HOW CAN IONIZING RADIATION ENTER AND LEAVE MY BODY? ......... 13
   1.5 HOW CAN IONIZING RADIATION AFFECT MY HEALTH? ...................... 15
   1.6 HOW CAN IONIZING RADIATION AFFECT CHILDREN? ....................... 16
   1.7 HOW CAN FAMILIES REDUCE THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO IONIZING
       RADIATION? ......................................................................................... 17
   1.8 IS THERE A MEDICAL TEST TO DETERMINE WHETHER I HAVE BEEN EXPOSED
       TO IONIZING RADIATION? .................................................................... 18
   1.9 WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS HAS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MADE TO
       PROTECT HUMAN HEALTH? .................................................................. 19
   1.10 WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION? .......................................... 21

2. PRINCIPLES OF IONIZING RADIATION .................................................... 23
   2.1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................... 23
   2.2 HISTORY, BACKGROUND INFORMATION, AND SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES OF
       IONIZING RADIATION ........................................................................... 25
       2.2.1 Historical Perspective on Ionizing Radiation ...................................... 25
       2.2.2 Basic Information on Ionizing Radiation ........................................... 31
       2.2.3 Principles of Radioactive Transformation ......................................... 34
       2.2.4 Interaction of Radiation with Matter ................................................ 37
       2.2.5 Characteristics of Emitted Radiation ............................................... 39
       2.2.5.1 Alpha Radiation ........................................................................ 39
       2.2.5.2 Beta Radiation .......................................................................... 40
       2.2.5.3 Gamma Radiation ..................................................................... 41
       2.2.6 Estimation of Energy Deposition in Human Tissues ......................... 41
   2.3 FUNDAMENTALS OF IONIZING RADIATION DOSIMETRY .................. 43
       2.3.1 Dose Units ................................................................................... 43
       2.3.2 Dosimetry Models .......................................................................... 44
       2.3.3 Terms Used in Radiation Safety Practice and Regulation .................. 46

2.4 BIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF RADIATION ................................................. 51
   2.4.1 Radiation Effects at the Cellular Level ................................................. 53
8. LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANT EXPOSURE TO RADIATION AND RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL ................................................................. 293

9. GLOSSARY ........................................................................... 335

10. REFERENCES ........................................................................ 351

APPENDICES

A. ATSDR MINIMAL RISK LEVELS AND WORKSHEETS ................. A-1

B. USER'S GUIDE ....................................................................... B-1

C. ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND SYMBOLS ............................. C-1

D. INDEX .................................................................................. D-1
LIST OF FIGURES

1-1 Sources of Radiation Exposure to the Average U.S. Citizen ............................................. 9
1-2 Detailed Breakdown of Radiation Exposures .................................................................... 9
1-3 EPA Map of Indoor Radon Levels in the United States .................................................. 10
2-1 Transformation of 100 µCi of $^{32}$P ............................................................................ 36
2-2 Whole Body Counter ........................................................................................................ 65
2-3 Low Energy Germanium (LEGe) Based Lung Counter .................................................. 66
2-4 Components of a Scintillation Detector ......................................................................... 68
2-5 Liquid Scintillation Counting (LSC) System .................................................................... 68
2-6 Geiger-Mueller Counter with an Energy-compensated Gamma Probe ......................... 72
2-7 Geiger-Mueller Counter with a Beta/Gamma Pancake-type Detection Probe ................. 72
2-8 Large Area Alpha Radiation Detector with Digital-Analog Survey Meter ...................... 73
2-9 Floor Monitor System with Multidetector Array ......................................................... 73
2-10 In-Situ Gamma Ray Spectrometer .................................................................................. 74
4-1 Schematic of Three Mile Island Unit 2 Nuclear Reactor ................................................. 202
4-2 Aerial View of the Damaged Chernobyl Reactor Facility .............................................. 204
4-3 Hot Spots of Radioactivity in the Regions Surrounding the Chernobyl Facility ............ 205
4-4 A View of the Sarcophagus Covering the Chernobyl Reactor Facility ......................... 207
6-1 Radiation Exposure to the Average U.S. Citizen ............................................................. 231
6-2 Schematic of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle ................................................................................. 255
6-3 Replicas of the “Little Boy” and “Fat Man” Bombs Dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki . 259
# LIST OF TABLES

1-1 Approximate Doses of Ionizing Radiation to Individuals ............................... 12

2-1 Characteristics of Nuclear Radiations .......................................................... 34

2-2 Effective Half-Lives of Selected Radionuclides in Major Adult Body Organs ........ 40

2-3 Tissue Weighting Factors Used by the USNRC and ICRP to Calculate Effective Dose .... 48

2-4 Quality Factors Used in USNRC Radiation Safety Regulations .......................... 49

2-5 Common and SI Units for Radiation Quantities .............................................. 51

2-6 Relative Radiosensitivity of Mammalian Cells ............................................... 54

2-7 Common Analytical Methods for Measuring Radioactive Material Inside and Radiation Outside the Body .......................................................... 64

2-8 Some Internet Sites Related to Ionizing Radiation ........................................... 80

3-1 ATSDR Priority Listing of Radionuclides Present at Department of Energy NPL Sites ..... 82

3-2 Summary of Some Studies of Humans Exposed to Radiation and Radionuclides ....... 91

3-3 Summary of the Dose Response Effects of Ionizing Radiation in Humans ............... 99

3-4 Genotoxicity of Ionizing Radiation \textit{In Vivo} .............................................. 139

3-5 Genotoxicity of Ionizing Radiation \textit{In Vitro} ............................................... 142

3-6 Estimated Genetic Effects of 1 Rem (0.01 Sv) of Radiation per Generation ............. 147

3-7 Estimated Lower 95\% Confidence Limits of Doubling Dose (in rem) from Chronic Radiation Exposure for Malformations, Stillbirths, Neonatal Deaths, and All Untoward Pregnancy Outcomes (Based on the Hiroshima and Nagasaki Atomic Bombing Data) ............ 150

3-8 Summary of Risks of Developing Cancer After Exposure to Ionizing Radiation .......... 158

3-9 Summary of Radiation Dose Response for Cancer Mortality by Site .................... 162

3-10 Distribution of Osteosarcomas in a Population of Female Dial Painters Exposed to $^{226}$Ra and $^{228}$Ra .............................................................. 172

3-11 Distribution of Head Carcinomas in a Population of Female Dial Painters Exposed to $^{226}$Ra ......................................................... 173

3-12 Alpha Doses from Injected $^{224}$Ra (in rad) by Age Group, Number, and Percentage of Subpopulation Developing Osteosarcoma ............................................... 175

3-13 Age Distribution, Alpha Dose (in rad), and \% Incidence of Osteosarcomas Induced