

DO YOU KNOW
WHAT'S IN
CIGARETTES?

We are exposed to cyanide pollution daily. Some cyanide compounds are generated by automobile engines in their exhaust. Smokers are directly exposed to significant amounts of cyanide from inhaling cigarette smoke.

Cyanides are usually found in the form of hydrogen cyanide, a **poisonous** gas (used in the gas chamber) or a volatile liquid with an almond-like smell. Cyanide is very toxic and exposure at certain levels can lead to **poisoning and even death**.

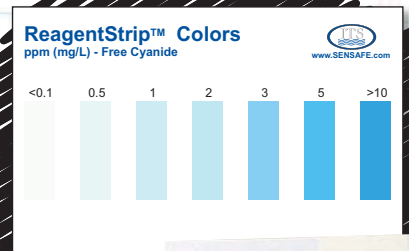
Cyanide in cigarette smoke doesn't come from the tobacco itself, but from the burning of the tobacco. Cyanide gas is produced from the burning of carbon material in the presence of Nitrogen. Plant material, like all living organisms, is carbon based and Nitrogen makes up 75% of our air. Therefore, it is common for cyanide gas to be generated from the burning of any material. The cyanide levels in inhaled cigarette smoke range from 0.01-0.40mg of cyanide per cigarette, which is equivalent to .1-4 ppm. Our bodies produce a natural defense mechanism that protects us against small amounts of cyanide poisoning. However, in large concentrations or with prolonged exposure, cyanide can be very toxic.

Cyanide reacts with iron in our bodies in place of oxygen, which prevents oxygen from reaching our central nervous system and brain. A lack of oxygen in nerve cells prevents nerve cells from communicating with each other and cause severe health effects, such as loss of feeling and movement of fingers and toes, loss of vision and even death. Death by cyanide poisoning can occur in as little as 2-3 minutes. The lethal dose of cyanide for a person is 50mg (0.05 grams) of hydrogen cyanide or 375mg of the cyanide salts. Early symptoms of cyanide poisoning include headaches, difficulty breathing, vomiting, anxiety, and nausea.

Want To See For Yourself?

The ITS Cyanide Science Fair Kit offers an effective tool for demonstrating the hazards of cigarette smoking.

- Easy, One dip procedure
- Non toxic tests are safe for all ages
- No hazardous chemicals to mix



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