

# Carbon Monoxide Screening

**Are You at Risk?**  
Early detection is important.

When we breathe air containing Carbon Monoxide (CO), it is absorbed through the bloodstream where it displaces oxygen and bonds with the hemoglobin in your blood. Carbon monoxide bonds to hemoglobin about 250 times better than oxygen. Therefore, when CO is in the lungs, the red blood cells pick it up before oxygen. Without oxygen, your vital organs, heart and brain become deprived and will begin to deteriorate. To compensate, your heart rate increases, breathing may become difficult, and in the most serious circumstances, cardiac trauma, brain damage, coma and even death will result.

## Determine your risk.

The following are risk factors that increase your chances of developing excess carbon monoxide levels or CO poisoning:

- Smoking
- Second Hand smoke
- Automobile fumes
- Smoking with poor ventilation
- Clogged Chimney
- Coal/wood fires

## Recognize the symptoms.

If you show any of these signs *please* have a Carbon Monoxide Screening done immediately:

- Constant Fatigue
- Dizziness or Confusion
- Headaches
- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Vision and/or hearing impairment

## Take the test.

Screening for elevated CO levels is a very simple, non-invasive procedure. The participant will stand and hold the CO monitor and exhale into the monitor. The results will indicate the participant's CO levels. Non-smokers usually obtain readings of less than eight. Regular, 20 a day smokers often obtain readings of 15 – 30, while heavier smokers may read up to 40, 50 or 60+. The results of an initial test may sound alarming to many smokers, but within just a couple of days of stopping, CO levels drop right down to normal and it is very encouraging for them to see the difference after working their way through the first few days without cigarettes.

Independent Nursing Care, LLC provides participants with education on prevention of increased CO Levels. Recommendations for lifestyle adjustments may be made and the importance of regular visits with your doctor will be emphasized.

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Completing your circle of care

## Summing it up.

**The health effects related to CO depend upon its concentration in the air and the duration of exposure.** The amount of carbon monoxide in the air is measured in parts per million (ppm). A pack a day smoker may have a CO level of 15 to 30 ppm. Two pack a day smokers may have a level of 30 to 60 ppm. Three or more pack a day smokers can be as high as 100 ppm. These levels depend on the brand of cigarette, the number smoked, and time elapsed since the last cigarette smoked. Smoking significantly reduces the amount of oxygen supplying the body. The most immediate health benefit to smoking cessation is a rapid decline in the CO level in the blood.

## Knowing your numbers.

Normally, people have a CO level of less than 8 parts per million (ppm) in their exhaled air. As the CO dose and the time of exposure increases, the saturation level of CO increases. This chart shows the CO levels compared to the effects on health.

PPM of CO	Health Effects
Less than 8	Normal range
9 - 22	Reduction of oxygen supply in the blood, increase in heart rate
23 - 95	Exercise tolerance reduced
95+	Headache, visual distortions

## Scheduling.

**Carbon Monoxide Screening Clinics** are available at flexible and convenient times. Once a date is chosen, you will receive a confirmation packet containing the following details:

1. Verification of clinic dates and times
2. A complete program summary
3. Duties and responsibilities of INC
4. Responsibility of your facility

**You will receive a comprehensive breakdown summary of the screening results.  
All personal information will be kept confidential.**

**Please call Independent Nursing Care to schedule  
a Carbon Monoxide Screening Clinic.**

phone: 716.655.8776 toll free: 1.888.264.5854

[www.INCnursing.com](http://www.INCnursing.com)

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