









Recognize Chemical Hazards

Chemicals can be dangerous for lots of reasons. Chemicals can burn or explode. Other chemicals are poisonous. Sometimes damage from a chemical doesn't show up for a long time. It might be days, weeks, months or even years before you realize you've been hurt by the chemical. When the damage doesn't show up right away, it is called a **delayed** health effect. Cancer is a delayed health effect, as it may take years for cancer to develop. **Just because a chemical doesn't hurt you right away doesn't mean it is safe.**

<p>Flammable chemicals</p>  <p>Pyrophoric chemicals burn if exposed to air.</p>	<p>Water-reactive chemicals react with water and give off flammable gases.</p>	<p>Self-reactive chemicals have to be kept cold. If they get too warm, they give off gases that can explode and burn.</p>	<p>Explosive chemicals</p> 
<p>Compressed gases and liquids are under very high pressure.</p> 	<p>Oxidizer chemicals give off oxygen and can make a fire spread.</p> 	<p>Corrosive chemicals burn skin and eyes, and will dissolve metal.</p> 	
<p>Toxins (toxic chemicals) quickly cause serious illness or death.</p> 	<p>An Asphyxiant chemical can suffocate you so you can't breathe.</p>	<p>Carcinogens cause cancer.</p> 	<p>Reproductive or Genetic toxins can make it difficult for men and women to have children. Mutagens causes mutations that are passed to children and Teratogens causes birth defects.</p>
<p>Irritants are chemicals that can damage skin or eyes, but will heal. Respiratory Tract Irritants can cause inflammation in lungs, nose, larynx and trachea.</p>		<p>Sensitizers are chemicals that can cause allergies on skin or when breathed in.</p> <p>Some toxic chemicals are also labeled with this pictogram.</p>	

For more information, visit the VEHS web site at www.vumc.org/safety.