

## METHYL BROMIDE

Methyl bromide is released into the air, making it capable of being readily breathed in<sup>1</sup>, and entering through the skin.<sup>2 3</sup> When used as a fumigant, some residue remains with the treated food.<sup>1</sup> It can also cling to clothing, gloves, etc.<sup>3</sup>

Methyl bromide is highly toxic to humans<sup>2</sup> and causes bodily injury to persons exposed.<sup>2</sup> At lower exposures it gives no odor warning so exposure can occur undetected by the person.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, monitoring devices and personal protective equipment are essential in areas of potential exposure.<sup>2</sup>

It is a delayed<sup>2 3</sup> and severe<sup>3</sup> lung irritant.<sup>2 3</sup> It can also cause severe and prolonged neurologic damage.<sup>2 3 4 5</sup> Persisting neurologic effects of exposure include impaired balance and gait,<sup>2 3 4 5</sup> muscle twitching,<sup>2</sup> tremor,<sup>2 3 4</sup> seizures,<sup>2 3</sup> impaired coordination,<sup>2 3 4</sup> numbness/tingling,<sup>2</sup> weakness,<sup>2 3</sup> cognitive impairment<sup>2</sup> and impaired reflexes.<sup>3 5</sup>

Neurologic damage can occur below levels that cause respiratory effects.<sup>2</sup> Brain and nerve damage can be permanent<sup>2 3</sup> due to damage of brain and nerve cells.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Casarett and Doull's Toxicology: The Basic Science of Poisons, edited by CD Klassen, McGraw Hill, 1991.

<sup>2</sup> Hamilton and Hardy's Industrial Toxicology, edited by AJ Finkel, pp 242-243 John Wright PSG, Inc., Boston, MA, 1983.

<sup>3</sup> Recognition and Management of Pesticide Poisoning, US Environmental Protection Agency, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1999, US EPA, Washington, D.C.

<sup>4</sup> Neurotoxins in Clinical Practice, edited by Dr. CG Goetz. Medical and Scientific Books, Spectrum Publications, New York, NY, 1985.

<sup>5</sup> Neurotoxicity of Industrial and Commercial Chemicals, Vol. I, edited by Dr. JL O'Donoghue, CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, 1985.