

Print-And-Go Sheet: Radioactive Materials Post-Exposure Guidance



This information sheet identifies immediate first aid actions that should be taken following exposure to radioactive materials.

Seek medical assistance immediately after a radioactive materials exposure, and take this document to the medical staff providing treatment. Be sure also to display your Weill Cornell Medicine employee ID card when visiting the medical provider.

Note: This guidance document provides information that medical personnel can reference but does not give individualized medical care or treatment protocols.

How to Seek Medical Assistance

Medical Health Physics (MHP) and Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) must be contacted first as an emergency response during all hours. Call MHP and EHS immediately for emergency response in order to evaluate the extent of the incident and assist with decontamination prior to leaving the controlled area:

- MHP: 646-962-4567
- EHS: 646-962-7233

Following assessment and decontamination, seek medical assistance.

- **For exposures Monday to Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm:**
 - **WCM Upper East Side Employees:** Go to the Payson House basement Workforce Health and Safety (WHS) Clinic at **1315 York Avenue** or call **212-746-4370**.
 - **Lower Manhattan Employees:** Go to the NewYork-Presbyterian (NYP) Lower Manhattan WHS Clinic at **170 William Street, Rooms G73A and G73B** or call **212-312-5249**.
 - **Students:** Go to Student Health Services (SHS) at **230 E. 69th Street, Suite 2BB** (between 2nd and 3rd Avenue) or call **646-962-6942**.
- **For exposures after business hours:**
 - **WCM Upper East Side Employees and Students:** Go to the NYP Emergency Room at **525 East 68th Street** or call **212-472-2222**.
 - **Lower Manhattan Employees:** Go to the NYP Lower Manhattan Hospital Emergency Room at **170 William Street** or call **212-312-5070**.

Give this sheet to the physician so they understand that you may have been exposed to radioactive materials, and that this is a medical emergency.

You can contact the NYP ER at 212-472-2222 or by dialing 2-2222 from any campus phone.

Hazard Summary

Radioactive materials are used in research laboratories for a variety of purposes. Bioactive molecules may be synthesized with one or more radioactive atoms incorporated into the structure. **Radioactive molecules may be hazardous or dissolved or contained in a vehicle that is hazardous.** The Weill Cornell Medicine Radiation Safety Manual (<https://ehs.weill.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/rsm.pdf>) describes the full Radiation Safety Program and personal decontamination procedures.

Post-Exposure Medical Evaluation & Treatment

1. VERIFY THAT DECONTAMINATION WAS PERFORMED

- **Wash skin thoroughly with soap and water for at least 5 minutes, and wash mucus membranes or eyes with plain water for at least 10 minutes.** Do not scrub vigorously, as that can open up the skin. Keep all existing cuts and abrasions covered when washing to keep radioactive material out of the wound.
- Do not squeeze the area of injury or use chemicals like bleach, as they are not known to be beneficial and may break down the skin's barrier function.



**Weill Cornell
Medicine**

Environmental Health and Safety

TEL 646-962-7233 WEB weill.cornell.edu/ehs EMAIL ehs@med.cornell.edu

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2. DOCUMENT THE EXPOSURE

Confirm the amount of radiation, biologics, and chemicals the worker was exposed to.

The activity and route of exposure of radiation usually represents a minor hazard to the individual. However, the associated biological and chemical hazard may require immediate medical attention.

3. TESTING AND FOLLOW-UP

Contact MHP at 646-962-4567 for specific guidance based on an assessment of the activity and the radioactive materials involved in the exposure.

Next Steps for Exposed Individual

- **If evaluated at the ER, follow up with your respective campus provider (WHS or Student Health) the following business day and complete an accident report there.**
- **Notify your supervisor of the incident.**

Contact Information

- MHP: 646-962-4567
- EHS: 646-962-7233, ehs@med.cornell.edu
- NYP-ER: 212-472-2222
- Security: 212-746-0911
- Workforce Health and Safety: 212-746-4370 (NYP-Weill Cornell), 212-312-5249 (NYP Lower Manhattan)
- Student Health Services: 646-962-6942