

Exposure to Chemicals

1. Hopefully you will not be exposed to a chemical in the lab. However, it is possible. Care must be taken when handling chemicals to avoid exposure even when wearing the proper safety equipment and following all the safety rules.
2. If you are exposed to a chemical, the first thing you need to do is inform your TA. Let your TA know what chemical you have been exposed to and where you have been exposed (face, hand, eyes, etc.).
3. It is highly unlikely that you will be exposed to the eyes because you will always be wearing your goggles in the lab. However, if it does happen, follow the instructions of your TA and the specific instructions from the MSDS sheet. Most eye exposures require you to rinse them thoroughly for 15 minutes at the eye washing station.
4. If your face is exposed to a chemical that requires it to be rinsed with water, then you will also be using the eyewash station for a minimum of 15 minutes. If it requires some different type of treatment, use the specific treatment required by the chemicals msds sheet.
5. Since you will be wearing proper clothing and a lab coat, exposure to the rest of your body is unlikely, but it still might occur. If you spill a chemical on your lab coat, remove the coat immediately. If you spill a chemical on a part of your clothing, remove that clothing immediately. Once the lab coat or piece of clothing has been removed, check to ensure that your skin has not been exposed. If it has not been exposed, follow the instructions of your TA.
6. If a small area of your skin has been exposed to a chemical that requires it to be rinsed with water, you may only need to use the sink or eye washing station for 15 minutes. If the exposure is in a large area of your body or to an area that cannot be rinsed using the sink, we may have to use the emergency shower for a minimum of 15 minutes.
7. Avoid inhalation of any chemical. To avoid exposure to the vapors of organic compounds, transfer all liquids inside the designated chemical hood. As quickly as possible, transfer them to your own hood and get them inside. If you have been overcome with the vapors of a chemical, let your TA know as soon as possible, and get some fresh air (also follow the instructions dictated by the msds for that chemical).