



**STEPS TO KEEP YOUR
HOUSEHOLD SAFE
FROM CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING**

**CARBON
MONOXIDE**
BE ALARMED!



Melissa Matthews' brother Tony died 10 years ago after a faulty grill caused Carbon Monoxide to build up in his flat. Melissa was just 13 at the time, but now feels ready to talk about her loss and hopes her story will convince

others to take action and protect themselves from Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

CARBON MONOXIDE – BE ALARMED!

Carbon Monoxide is a highly poisonous gas that has no colour, taste or smell. It can be produced by any appliances burning gas, wood, oil or coal. Poisoning by Carbon Monoxide can be fatal or cause lasting health damage. Early symptoms can include nausea, dizziness, tiredness and headaches.

There are around 30 deaths each year from Carbon Monoxide poisoning. However, a better gauge of the scale of the problem has been revealed by new research which found that nearly **one person in thirty** surveyed believed that they had suffered from Carbon Monoxide poisoning. Over **20 million households** in the UK are thought to be insufficiently protected against Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

The six main symptoms of Carbon Monoxide poisoning are headaches, dizziness, nausea, breathlessness, collapse and loss of consciousness.



34 year-old Rascim Sherwani had the scare of his life when he started having chest pains and palpitations while watching TV in March this year. He managed to get to the phone to dial 999 before he passed out. He and his flatmates were rushed to hospital with Carbon Monoxide poisoning caused by a blocked flue. Fortunately all survived.

STEPS TO KEEP YOUR HOUSEHOLD SAFE



1. Fit an audible alarm

Audible Carbon Monoxide alarms can be bought from many DIY stores, supermarkets and energy suppliers from as little as £15. If you are a tenant, your landlord may provide you with one. We do not recommend the use of 'Black Spot' indicators as these are often inaccurate and will not alert or wake you if Carbon Monoxide is present.



2. Service your appliances

Make sure all fuel-burning appliances are serviced annually by an engineer who is qualified and registered with the appropriate organisation: Gas Safe Register (gas), HETAS (solid fuel) or OFTEC (oil). If you live in rented accommodation with gas appliances your landlord must provide you with proof that a registered engineer has serviced the gas appliances within the last 12 months.



3. Don't block ventilation

Make sure that vents, flues and chimneys aren't blocked. Chimneys should be swept at least once a year – or more often if used heavily.



4. Know the signs

The six main symptoms of Carbon Monoxide poisoning are headaches, dizziness, nausea, breathlessness, collapse and loss of consciousness. A key indication that Carbon Monoxide may be the cause is if symptoms disappear or get better when you leave the home and come back when you return. Look out for sooting or staining on or around your appliance and for gas appliances burning with a lazy yellow or orange flame rather than a sharp blue one. Excessive condensation in the room where the appliance is installed is another sign.

IN AN EMERGENCY

IF YOUR ALARM GOES OFF OR YOU SPOT OTHER SIGNS OF CARBON MONOXIDE



- Open doors or windows for ventilation.



- Seek medical advice.



- Call the relevant emergency advice line:
Gas Emergency Service
(24 hours) 0800 111 999;
Solid Fuel Advice Line
0845 601 4406;
Oil (OFTEC) 0845 658 5080.



- Have all appliances serviced and checked by a registered engineer. Do not use them until you're told it's safe to do so.

IF YOU FEEL UNWELL



- Go to your GP, call NHS Direct on 0845 4647 (NHS 24 in Scotland on 08454 242424) or, if it is urgent, call 999 for an ambulance.

Carbon Monoxide - Be Alarmed! is the national campaign to reduce the number of deaths and injuries caused by Carbon Monoxide.

For more information about how to stay safe please visit the campaign website:

www.co-bealarmed.co.uk



This campaign is funded and delivered by the Energy Retail Association on behalf of the Carbon Monoxide Consumer Awareness Alliance (COCAA) and supported by more than 40 other organisations.