

COMMON HEALTH QUESTIONS RELATED TO MONOCHLORAMINE

26) Does **monochloramine** cause digestive problems?

EPA believes that water disinfected with **monochloramine** that meets regulatory standards has no known or anticipated adverse health effects, including digestive problems.

- EPA's regulatory standard for monochloramine is based primarily on risk assessments focused on drinking water.
- EPA's standard for monochloramine is set at a level where no digestive problems are expected to occur.
- EPA's regulatory standard for monochloramine provides a wide margin of safety to offset uncertainties in risk assessments.

An important characteristic of monochloramine is that any amount ingested quickly leaves the body.

- Monochloramine is broken down by saliva.
- Monochloramine is neutralized by stomach acid.
- Monochloramine leaves the body through human waste.

People who believe that their digestive problems are related to monochloramine should consult with their doctors.

- The causes of digestive problems are often difficult to determine.
- People who have digestive problems should inform their doctors about what they have drunk or eaten and about any unusual exposures to chemicals.
- CDC's investigation¹ of reports of monochloramine-related digestive problems associated with drinking water use was unable to draw any conclusions about monochloramine and health effects.

Additional Supporting Information:

1. CDC and EPA conducted a preliminary investigation of reports of monochloramine-related digestive problems associated with drinking water. The investigation consisted of a questionnaire filled out by complainants. The information collected can be used to help design future epidemiologic studies. CDC's trip report can be found at:

http://healthvermont.gov/enviro/water/documents/CDC_Chloramines_report_011608.pdf.