

Insert agency name

Insert logo

Insert agency address

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Insert date)

For information, contact:
(Insert contact information)

Headline

(Insert information about the event)

Local authorities believe that people who were at (insert location) on (insert date and time) may have been exposed to the chemical ricin. Public Health and other local authorities are investigating this incident.

Ricin is a poison that can be made from the waste left over from processing castor beans. Ricin works by getting inside the cells of a person's body and preventing the cells from making the proteins they need. Without the proteins, cells die, and eventually the whole body can shut down and die.

(If ricin was inhaled, insert: Within a few hours of inhaling significant amounts of ricin, the likely symptoms would be coughing, tightness in the chest, difficulty breathing, nausea, and aching muscles. Within the next few hours, the body's airways (such as lungs) would become severely inflamed (swollen and hot), excess fluid would build up in the lungs, breathing would become even more difficult, and the skin might turn blue. Excess fluid in the lungs would be diagnosed by x-ray or by listening to the chest with a stethoscope.)

(If ricin was ingested, insert: If someone swallows a significant amount of ricin, he or she would have internal bleeding of the stomach and intestines that would lead to vomiting and bloody diarrhea. Eventually, the person's liver, spleen, and kidneys might stop working, and the person could die.)

No antidote exists for ricin. Ricin poisoning is treated by giving the victim supportive medical care to minimize the effects of the poisoning.

If you believe you have been exposed, or if you have any of the symptoms associated with ricin poisoning, please seek medical attention immediately.