

Important Information

Date: 8th July 2010

Title: Health & Safety in the Laboratory

Methanol can be absorbed through the respiratory ducts or the skin. According to the literature, this can be significant. In general, methanol poisoning can be divided into several stages. First, a narcotic effect occurs and, in comparison with ethanol, the biotransformation process of methanol is slower. Later, formic acid, which is formed through enzymatic oxidation of methanol, inhibits vesicular breathing. Typical symptoms in this phase are difficulty breathing, and in extreme cases of methanol exposure, paralysis can lead to death. Nearly parallel to these initial symptoms, the third stage progresses by disturbing the victim's vision. In the beginning phase, this effect is reversible. In more severe cases, irreversible blindness can result.

Methanol based reagents play an important part in Karl Fischer moisture analysis and although manufacturers of such reagents have replaced methanol with ethanol, the majority of the reagents being used still contain methanol.

Safer Reagent Exchange

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For more information on this press release please contact the Marketing Department at Metrohm UK Ltd.

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Note to Editors:

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