# A screen shot of a computer Description automatically generatedFormaldehyde in healthcare

Formaldehyde is a toxic colorless gas that is used commonly in the healthcare industry. It can be found in hospitals, laboratories, dental and doctor’s offices. It is frequently used as a preservative for tissues, as well as for sterilizing and disinfecting and often found as a water-based solution.

*******Exposures to Formaldehyde:*

Formaldehyde is a skin irritant and can cause allergic reactions. It has a notable impact on the respiratory system and can cause breathing difficulty, asthma attacks, headaches and eye irritation. It is a known carcinogen and if ingested, the chemical can be lethal.

*Protective Measures:*

* Identify any employees that work around or are exposed to formaldehyde.
* Determine the level of exposure for each employee.
* Anyone that experiences adverse effects to the chemical should be reassigned to positions with significantly less or no exposure until the condition improves.
* Implement engineering controls to keep exposures within permissible levels or wear approved respirators.
* All solutions or mixtures should be labeled appropriately.
* Proper personal protective equipment should be worn when working with the chemical to prevent skin and eye contact.
* Eye wash stations should be available if eye contact is possible.

All affected employees should be trained and aware of the exposures to formaldehyde as well as the risks and protective measures to be taken prior to use.