



Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission

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Radiation Safety Data Sheet

This data sheet presents information on radioisotopes only.

For information on chemical compounds incorporating this radionuclide, see the relevant Material Safety Data Sheet.

Part 1 - RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL IDENTIFICATION

Chemical Symbol:	H	Common Names:	Tritium
Atomic Weight:	3	Atomic Number:	1

Part 2 - RADIATION CHARACTERISTICS

Physical Half-Life: 12.35 years
CNSC Exemption Quantity (in Bq): 1×10^9 (1 GBq)

A CNSC license is not required if the amount of radioactive nuclides possessed is less than one Exemption Quantity.

Principal Emissions	Average Energy (MeV)**	Maximum Energy (MeV)***	Dose Rate at 1m Distance (mSv/h/GBq)	Recommended Shielding
Neutrons	-	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gamma & X-rays	-	n/a	n/a	n/a
Beta*	0.0057	0.0186	n/a	n/a
Alpha	-	n/a	n/a	n/a

* Where beta radiation is present, bremsstrahlung radiation will be produced. Shielding may therefore be required.

** Average energy of most abundant emission.

*** Maximum of most abundant emission.

Progeny	n/a
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Part 3 - DETECTION AND MEASUREMENT

Method of Detection: Wipes counted by liquid scintillation

Dosimetry:

External: TLD (whole body & skin) _____ Extremity _____ Neutron _____
Internal: Whole body _____ Thorax _____ Urine analysis T _____ Other (specify) _____

Part 4 - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Tritium is not a radiation hazard unless it enters the body. Once in the body, tritium water is uniformly distributed in the body water and can then irradiate live tissue. Inhaled tritium gas will irradiate the lungs. Tritiated water is much more (10,000 ×) radiotoxic than gaseous tritium. Tritiated thymidine will be concentrated in the nuclei of DNA synthesising cells and may result in chromosome damage. Tritiated water can be absorbed through the surface of skin, leading to an internal exposure. Gaseous tritium is a fire and explosion hazard when exposed to heat or flame and can react vigorously with oxidizing materials.

Recommended protective clothing: Lab coat. PVC gloves (0.5 mm thick) are preferred because of this material's low permeability to tritiated water. Many tritium compounds readily penetrate gloves and skin. Handle these compounds remotely, wear two pairs of gloves and change the outer layer at least every twenty minutes. Plastic aprons provide added protection especially against tritiated water. Plastic suits may be necessary for work at TBq levels or in an atmosphere contaminated with tritiated water.

Handle tritiated water, gases and volatile liquids in ventilated enclosures. Store tritiated water at room temperature as it is known to contaminate the frost in freezers. Use glass containers to store tritium compounds because tritiated water and tritiated organic solvents will pass through plastic. Consult CNSC license for requirements concerning engineering controls, protective equipment, and special storage requirements.

Part 5 - ANNUAL LIMIT ON INTAKE

	Ingestion	Inhalation	
Compound Type	Tritiated water	Tritiated water	Elemental tritium gas
Annual Limit on Intake (Bq)	1E+09	1E+09	1E+13

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The following is a guide for first responders. The following actions, including remediation, should be carried out by qualified individuals. In cases where life threatening injury has resulted, **first** treat the injury, **second** deal with personal decontamination.

Personal Decontamination Techniques

- C Wash well with soap and water and monitor skin
- C Do Not abrade skin, only blot dry
- C Decontamination of clothing and surfaces are covered under operating and emergency procedures

Spill and Leak Control

- C Alert everyone in the area
- C Confine the problem or emergency (includes the use of absorbent material)
- C Clear area
- C Summon Aid

Emergency Protective Equipment, Minimum Requirements

- C Gloves
- C Footwear Covers
- C Safety Glasses
- C Outer layer or easily removed protective clothing
- C Suitable respirator selected