

XYLENE

Overview

Xylene is composed of three isomers (ortho-, meta-, and para-xylene), characterized as a colorless, sweet-smelling and highly flammable liquid. It occurs naturally in petroleum and coal tar. Xylene is used as a [solvent](#), a cleaning agent, and a paint thinner. It is also used in the printing, rubber, and leather industries, and found in small amounts in airplane fuel and gasoline ([#ATSDR](#)).

Just the facts

Physical Information

Name: Xyelene

Use: [solvent](#), cleaning agent, paint thinner; used in printing, rubber, leather industries; found in airplane fuel and gasoline

Source: petroleum, coal tar

Recommended daily intake: none

Absorption: dermal, inhalation

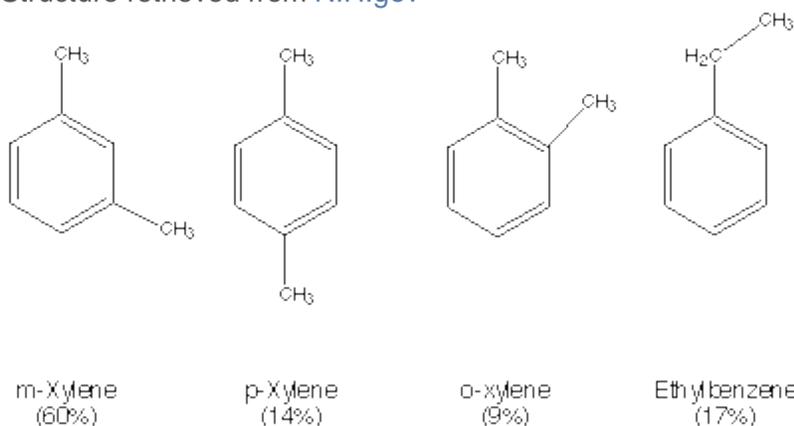
Sensitive individuals: humans and animals

Toxicity/symptoms: headaches, lack of muscle coordination, dizziness, confusion, change in sense of balance; skin, eyes, nose, and throat irritation; breathing difficulties; stomach discomfort, possible changes in lung and kidney; death at very high exposure levels (in humans)
~~~ CNS depression and irritation of eyes and skin (in animals)

Regulatory facts: EPA limit = 10ppm drinking water; OSHA 8-hr TWA = 100ppm air

#### Chemical Structure

Structure retrieved from [NIH.gov](#)



## Chemical Description

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Xylene (in commercial use) is mixture of three isomers: (1.) ortho-xylene, and (2.) meta-xylene are clear, colorless, flammable, sweet-smelling liquid, while (3.) para-xylene, at low temperatures, appear like clear, colorless plates ([#OSHA](#)).

## Uses

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Xylene is used as a [solvent](#), a cleaning agent, and a paint thinner. It is also used in the printing, rubber, and leather industries. Small amounts of xylene are also present in airplane fuel and gasoline ([#ATSDR](#)).

## Health Effects

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Low levels of exposure to xylene have no known health effects to humans. However, high levels of exposure for short or long periods can cause headaches, lack of muscle coordination, dizziness, confusion, and changes in one's sense of balance. High levels of exposure for short periods can also cause irritation of the skin, eyes, nose, and throat; breathing difficulty; delayed reaction time; memory difficulties; stomach discomfort and possibly changes in the liver and kidneys. At very high exposure levels xylene can result to death ([#ATSDR](#)).

## Precautions

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Use [Solvents - Chemical Profiles and External Links](#) (i.e. paints, gasoline) with adequate ventilation and out of reach of children.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, glasses and faceshields should be worn to prevent direct inhalation, and skin and eye contact.

Source : <http://www.toxipedia.org/display/toxipedia/Xylene>