



Amesbury incident advice

Background

You will be aware of recent events in the Amesbury and Salisbury area involving the nerve agent Novichok. We understand you may be concerned about possible health risks and this document aims to provide you with advice to help you stay safe.

This precautionary advice is for those who visited a number of locations in the areas that are listed below, or who think they may have been in contact with the individuals from 10pm on Friday 29 June before they became unwell.

Risk to public health

As a precaution, PHE advice to everyone in the Salisbury and Amesbury area is that nobody, adult or child, should pick up any foreign object that does not belong to them and could contain (or could have previously contained) liquid or gel, in the interests of their own safety. In practice this means do not pick up containers, lids, syringes, needles, cosmetics or similar objects, made of materials such as metal, plastic or glass.

As we approach school holidays, parents should talk with their children to be sure they understand that they should not pick up anything that they haven't dropped themselves.

Our current advice is that the risk to the public is low. We will keep this assessment under constant review as further information becomes known.

While there is no immediate health risk to anyone who may have been in any of the locations identified by the police (listed below), as a highly precautionary measure we are advising that people undertake the following actions.

If you visited any of the locations identified by police you should:

- wash the clothing that you were wearing in an ordinary washing machine using your regular detergent at the temperature recommended for the clothing

- wipe personal items such as phones, handbags and other electronic items with cleansing or baby wipes and dispose of the wipes in the bin (ordinary domestic waste disposal)
- if your items are dry-clean only, you should keep them double-bagged and securely fastened. Further details will follow
- none of these actions should damage your washing machine
- other items such as jewellery and spectacles that cannot go in the washing machine or be cleaned with baby wipes should be hand washed with warm water and detergent and then rinsed with clean cold water
- please thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water after cleaning any items
- you do not need to seek advice from a health professional unless you are experiencing symptoms

This precautionary advice is only for the clothes worn or items carried at the time of your visit to any of the five locations identified and listed below. It does not apply to the belongings or clothes of others that you may have come into contact with later – these items do not need to be cleaned. This advice stands from 10pm on Friday 29 June.

Locations:

- Queen Elizabeth Gardens in Salisbury
- a property at John Baker House, Rolleston Street, Salisbury
- a property on Muggleton Road, Amesbury
- Boots the Chemist, Stonehenge Walk, Amesbury
- the Baptist church on Raleigh Crescent, Amesbury

Answers to common questions

How can you be sure there is a low risk?

It is really important to stress that the position will be continually assessed as further information comes to light. Our current assessment is based on the small number of casualties affected.

If the health risk to the public is low, why have the police closed some sites off?

Police have said they are currently keeping an open mind as to the circumstances regarding this incident and the sites have been cordoned off as an entirely precautionary measure while partner organisations work together to find out more. PHE's current advice, based on the small number of casualties affected, is that the risk to the public is low.

What is the risk at the hospital? Is it safe for staff to go to work/patients/visitors to go to the hospital?

PHE's current advice, based on the small number of casualties affected, is that the risk to the public is low. Salisbury District Hospital is open as usual and is advising people to still attend routine appointments unless they are contacted to state otherwise. People should continue to go about their daily business while observing any cordons the police have put in place.

What about people who live in the same household as someone who went to one of these sites?

Anyone who is concerned as a result of contact they may have had with one of the individuals affected by this incident should contact the helpline that has been set up by Wiltshire Police, who will be able to give further advice. The numbers are Freephone 0800 092 0410 or 020 7158 0124.

What should I do if I have been in one of these areas and I start to feel ill?

PHE's current assessment is that the risk to the public is low. Anyone who is concerned about their health or any symptoms they may be experiencing for any reason should seek health advice by telephoning NHS 111.

What are the symptoms of Novichok poisoning?

Some of the symptoms that may appear as a result of poisoning with Novichok include:

- nausea and vomiting
- headache
- disordered mental state
- blurred/painful vision
- involuntary faecal incontinence

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