

Temperatures may not be much below freezing, but the chance of carbon monoxide poisoning in children and families still increases during the winter, when home heating appliances are used. Erika Janes, RN and Child Advocate with Kosair Children's Hospital, says this time of year people will go to any extent to heat their homes:

{audio}http://wcluradio.com/newscuts/012114kosair1.mp3{/audio}

Often times the dangers of home heating aren't considered, such as carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that can be dangerous, if not fatal, should a heating appliance malfunction.

{audio}http://wcluradio.com/newscuts/012114kosair2.mp3{/audio}

To make matters worse, carbon monoxide poisoning can go undetected, as symptoms typically mimic viral illness like the flu. Symptoms can include headache, fatigue, dizziness, nausea, diarrhea and confusion. Children and the elderly can be especially susceptible to CO poisoning. If carbon monoxide poisoning is suspected, immediately seek medical attention.

Janes recommends that every home have a carbon monoxide detector. She told WCLU News, sometimes the decibel range is hard to hear, and the one she bought has her recorded voice sounding the alarm:

{audio}http://wcluradio.com/newscuts/012114kosair3.mp3{/audio}

The alarm on the detector should sound at least 85 decibels and give family members ample time to ventilate or leave the home and call 911. If the detectors are battery-powered, the

batteries should be tested twice a year, at the same time the home's fire alarms are tested.