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# Beryllium Oxide

National Cancer Institute

## Source

National Cancer Institute. *Beryllium Oxide*. NCI Thesaurus. Code C45879.

A white colored, crystalline, inorganic compound that emits toxic fumes of beryllium oxides upon heating. Beryllium oxide is widely used in industry due to its low density and high thermal and electrical conductivity. It is used in high-technology ceramics, electronic heat sinks, electrical insulators, high-power devices, high-density electrical circuits, microwaves, X-ray windows, nuclear reactor fuels and for various aerospace and military applications. Inhalation exposure to its dust irritates the nose, throat and lungs and can cause pneumonitis. Prolonged exposure can result in a chronic beryllium disease called berylliosis causing granuloma and fibrosis formation in the lungs. Beryllium is associated with an increased risk of developing lung cancer. (NCI05)