

Means of exposure to ionizing radiation



Two modes of exposure to ionizing radiation are possible:

EXTERNAL EXPOSURE

In the case of external exposure, the radioactive source is outside the organism. If the whole of the organism is affected, this is referred to as global exposure; if only part of it is affected, then it is a case of partial exposure.

In the case of external «remote» exposure, exposure stops as soon as the person is sufficiently far away from the radioactive source or if a screen (shielding) is placed between the person and the source.

When radiation is emitted by radionuclides present by being deposited on the surface of the skin, in direct contact with the person, we also talk about "external contamination".

INTERNAL EXPOSURE

The radioactive source has penetrated inside the organism. This is referred to as «internal contamination».

This can happen if a person inhales radioactive particles present in the air or ingests food that is contaminated with radioactive particles, or if there is direct contact with the skin or a wound (in this case we talk about «external contamination» that becomes "internal contamination").

When contamination occurs, exposure to radioactive particles continues as long as the source remains inside or in contact with the body.