

1 Tips on TCE

2 TCE, or trichloroethylene, is a sweet-smelling, volatile liquid synthesized for use as a dry-cleaning
3 agent, spot cleaner, degreaser, and industrial solvent. It can contaminate air, groundwater, and
4 drinking water.

5 TCE affects many organ systems. Exposure may cause health effects, including cranial nerve
6 damage, scleroderma, and congenital heart malformations, as well as decreased sperm quality
7 and sex hormone levels in males and amenorrhea and miscarriages in females. TCE has been
8 associated with kidney and liver cancer as well as non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Drinking alcohol after
9 TCE exposure can cause vasodilation, also called “degreaser’s flush.”

10 Blood and urine TCE levels have limited clinical utility as they cannot predict health effects.
11 However, elevated levels can confirm occupational exposure in some situations.

12 Treatment is primarily supportive, and ongoing exposure should be avoided or reduced when
13 possible.

14 Advise patients to select TCE-free products, including degreasers and spot cleaners. Consult a
15 maternal fetal medicine specialist when concerned about TCE exposure in a pregnant patient.

16 Visit ATSDR’s website to learn more.