

Hydrocarbons Toxicity

A *hydrocarbon* is an organic compound made up primarily of carbon and hydrogen atoms, typically ranging from 1 to 60 carbon atoms in length. This definition includes products derived from plants (pine oil, vegetable oil), animal fats (cod liver oil), natural gas, petroleum, or coal tar. There are two basic types of hydrocarbon molecules, *aliphatic* (straight or branched chains) and *cyclic* (closed ring), each with its own subclasses

Physical properties of hydrocarbons vary by the number of carbon atoms and by molecular structure . Branching of chains tends to destabilize intermolecular forces, so that less energy is required to separate the molecules .

Compound	Common Uses	Viscosity (SUS) ^a
<i>Aliphatics</i>		
Gasoline	Motor vehicle fuel	30
Naphtha	Charcoal lighter fluid	29
Kerosene	Heating fuel	35
Turpentine	Paint thinner	33
Mineral spirits	Paint and varnish thinner	30–35
Mineral seal oil	Furniture polish	30–35
Heavy fuel oil	Heating oil	>450
<i>Aromatics</i>		
Benzene	Solvent, reagent, gasoline additive	31
Toluene	Solvent, spray paint solvent	28
Xylene	Solvent, paint thinner, reagent	28
<i>Halogenated</i>		
Methylene chloride	Solvent, paint stripper, propellant	27
Carbon tetrachloride	Solvent, propellant, refrigerant	30
Trichloroethylene	Degreaser, spot remover	27
Tetrachloroethylene	Dry cleaning solvent, chemical intermediate	28