

MIL-C-43616 (Aircraft Cleaning Compound, Solvent Emulsion)

EXPOSURE IN NAVY AVIATION:

SHORT- AND LONG-TERM HEALTH EFFECTS

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MIL-C-43616 is a military-specification solvent-emulsion aircraft cleaning compound used for:

- General aircraft washing
- Degreasing surfaces prior to maintenance
- Corrosion control preparation
- Wheel well, landing gear, and engine bay cleaning
- Fuel spill cleanup
- Removing hydraulic, JP-5, and lubricating oil residues

This cleaner contains:

- Alkaline detergents
- Surfactants
- Emulsifying agents
- Solvents (including petroleum distillates or glycol ethers depending on formulation)

Exposure occurs through inhalation of vapors or mist, direct skin contact, and accidental eye exposure.

SHORT-TERM (ACUTE) HEALTH EFFECTS OF MIL-C-43616 EXPOSURE

1. ****Respiratory Irritation****

Inhalation during spraying or scrubbing may cause:

- Burning throat and nasal passages
- Coughing
- Chest tightness
- Shortness of breath
- Headaches

Symptoms intensify in enclosed hangars and aircraft bays with poor ventilation.

2. ****Skin Irritation****

MIL-C-43616 can be mildly caustic and defatting.

Common symptoms:

- Redness
- Dryness or cracking
- Burning sensations
- Dermatitis after repeated exposure

3. ****Eye Irritation****

Mist or splash contact may result in:

- Burning
- Redness
- Tearing
- Temporary blurred vision

4. ****Neurological Symptoms****

If solvent components are significant:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Mild confusion or slowed reactions

5. ****Nausea****

From inhaling concentrated vapors or from ingestion of aerosolized droplets.

LONG-TERM (CHRONIC) HEALTH EFFECTS OF MIL-C-43616 EXPOSURE

1. ****Chronic Dermatitis****

Repeated skin contact may cause:

- Persistent dryness
- Cracking and bleeding
- Increased skin sensitivity to chemicals

2. ****Respiratory Sensitization****

Long-term exposure may contribute to:

- Chronic cough
- Reactive airway disease
- Exacerbated asthma symptoms
- Reduced pulmonary function over time

3. ****Neurological Effects****

Solvent-containing formulations may lead to:

- Chronic headaches
- Cognitive slowdown
- Difficulty concentrating
- Fatigue

4. ****Liver and Kidney Stress****

Long-term exposure to glycol ethers or petroleum solvents may cause:

- Mild liver enzyme elevation
- Kidney irritation

5. ****Chemical Sensitivity****

Chronic exposure may lead to hypersensitivity to:

- Cleaners
- Solvents
- Fumes

NAVY AVIATION ROLES AT HIGHEST RISK

- Aviation Structural Mechanics (AM)
- Aviation Machinist's Mates (AD)
- Aviation Electronics Technicians (AT)
- Corrosion control specialists
- Aircraft wash rack teams
- Wheel well, landing gear, and engine bay maintenance crews
- Fuel and hydraulic spill cleanup personnel

Confined spaces and repeated wash operations significantly increase inhalation and contact exposure.

VA DISABILITY CLAIM WRITEUP EXAMPLE

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****Statement in Support of Claim: MIL-C-43616 Exposure – Navy Aviation****

I am submitting this statement in support of my claim for service-connected disability due to long-term occupational exposure to MIL-C-43616 aircraft cleaning compound during my service in the United States Navy.

From [YEAR] to [YEAR], I served as an Aviation [RATE/MOS] assigned to the USS [SHIP] and various naval air stations. My duties required routine use of MIL-C-43616 for aircraft cleaning, degreasing, corrosion control preparation, and spill cleanup. These tasks were often performed in enclosed spaces such as wheel wells, landing gear bays, fuselage compartments, and hangars where ventilation was limited.

Personal protective equipment such as gloves, respirators, or eye protection was not consistently provided or enforced. As a result, I frequently inhaled the cleaner's vapors and experienced immediate symptoms including headaches, throat irritation, dizziness, nausea, and eye burning. My hands and arms were regularly exposed to the cleaner, leading to chronic dryness, irritation, and dermatitis.

Since leaving the Navy, I have continued to suffer from chronic health issues consistent with long-term exposure to industrial cleaners, including persistent respiratory irritation, chronic dermatitis, fatigue, recurring headaches, and difficulty with memory or concentration. Medical evaluations have documented [RESPIRATORY CONDITION / CHRONIC SKIN CONDITION / NEUROLOGICAL SYMPTOMS / OTHER], all of which are associated with repeated exposure to alkaline and solvent-based aircraft cleaners such as MIL-C-43616.

Given the frequency and duration of exposure, the lack of adequate protective measures, and the ongoing nature of my health conditions, I believe my disabilities are directly related to my military service. I respectfully request that the VA recognize these conditions as service-connected.

Signed,

[Veteran Name]

[Date]