

# WORKING SAFELY WITH TOXIC POWDERS

## EXPOSURE TO TOXIC POWDERS

- Powders can be inhaled if they become airborne.
- Powders can be ingested if they settle on surfaces and contaminate your hands or your food.
- Exposure to powders can be prevented by following the steps at right.

## GENERAL TIPS

- Never handle toxic, harmful or irritating powders near someone's desk or near a food preparation area.
- Handle these materials in a chemical fume hood, biological safety cabinet (BSC), or other exhaust hood whenever possible. This is required for [particularly hazardous substances](#) (PHSs) in powder form.
- If you need to weigh out a toxic, harmful or irritating powder but you cannot locate the balance inside a fume hood or BSC, consider one of these alternatives:
  - ⇒ Purchase the material in liquid form so that you avoid handling powder altogether, OR
  - ⇒ Purchase in pre-weighed amounts, preferably in a sealed vial with a septum so that diluent can be injected directly into vial, OR
  - ⇒ Obtain an exhausted balance enclosure, OR
  - ⇒ Follow the steps below to safely weigh the material using a balance that is not in a hood or BSC.

## SAFE WEIGHING OF POWDERS

### WHEN THE BALANCE IS NOT IN THE HOOD

- Tare (pre-weigh) an empty container with a lid.
- Go to fume hood or BSC, add approximate amount of powder to container, and close lid.
- Return to the balance and determine mass of powder.
- Return to the fume hood or BSC to prepare solution.