

# PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT

Questions? Contact the Washington Poison Center 24/7/365 at 1 (800) 222-1222.  
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## Methanol-Based Hand Sanitizers

Some alcohol-based hand sanitizers that were manufactured in Mexico have been found to contain a significant amount of methanol, also known as wood alcohol. Due to its toxic effects, methanol is not an accepted ingredient in hand sanitizers, and is dangerous to use— recent updates from the FDA report adverse events among adults and children exposed to contaminated hand sanitizer products, including blindness, hospitalizations, and death.

### METHANOL POISONING

Methanol poisoning may occur from repeated use of contaminated products on the skin. The highest, potentially life-threatening risk from methanol is from ingesting (swallowing) products containing methanol.

### SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Exposure to methanol may lead to blurred vision, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, headache, loss of coordination, decreased alertness, decreased visual acuity, and blindness.

Call the Washington Poison Center immediately (1-800-222-1222) if someone has swallowed hand sanitizer, or is experiencing symptoms from repeated use of hand sanitizer on their skin.

### TREATMENT

Methanol poisoning requires treatment with a specific antidote and/or hemodialysis. **Call the Washington Poison Center (1-800-222-1222) for immediate assistance and consult with our physician Medical Toxicologists for further indications and details.**

### HOW TO CHECK HAND SANITIZER PRODUCTS

Check hand sanitizer products against the [FDA's testing and manufacturer's recalls list](#). If the product or product manufacturer is on this list, stop using the product and dispose of it immediately in appropriate hazardous waste containers. Do not flush or pour them down the drain.

For information on recalls and methanol-contaminated hand sanitizer in Spanish, visit [the Spanish version FDA update page](#) and [download basic messaging](#) on the Washington Poison Center's website.

### SAFETY WITH HAND SANITIZER PRODUCTS

All alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be harmful when used inappropriately. Use the following tips to keep yourself and others safe from potential poisoning:

- Do not swallow any hand sanitizers.
- Only use hand sanitizers for their intended purpose: to clean hands.
- Supervise children when using hand sanitizer. Apply a small amount to the child's hands, and have them rub their hands together until dry.
- Keep hand sanitizers out of sight and out of reach of children when not in use.
- Contact the Washington Poison Center immediately (1-800-222-1222) if someone has swallowed hand sanitizer. Do not wait for symptoms to occur.