

This is a message from the California Department of Education (CDE), Early Learning and Care Division (ELCD).

The ELCD is sharing information received from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care.



FDA Warning About the Dangers of Hand Sanitizers With Methanol

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a warning to consumers and health care providers about hand sanitizer products that are labeled as containing ethanol (also known as ethyl alcohol) but that have tested positive for methanol contamination. Methanol (i.e., methyl alcohol or wood alcohol) is a substance that can be toxic when absorbed through the skin or ingested and can be life-threatening when ingested. As per the FDA news update hyperlinked below, “Methanol is not an acceptable active ingredient for hand sanitizers and must not be used due to its toxic effects. FDA’s investigation of methanol in certain hand sanitizers is ongoing. The agency will provide additional information as it becomes available.”

FDA has identified more than two dozen hand sanitizers that are toxic when absorbed through the skin. ***It is urgent*** that this information be sent to child care providers, parents, state child care licensing offices, child care professional development agencies, and others who can disseminate this information.

Consumers who have been exposed to a hand sanitizer containing methanol and are experiencing symptoms should seek immediate treatment for the potential toxic effects of methanol poisoning, which can include nausea, vomiting, headaches, blurred vision, permanent blindness, and seizures. Although people of all ages are at risk for methanol poisoning, “young children who accidentally ingest these products and adolescents and adults who drink these products as an alcohol (ethanol) substitute are most at risk.”

Please see the full FDA news update on hand sanitizers with methanol at <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/fda-updates-hand-sanitizers-methanol> for further information.

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