

HAND SANITIZER USE



To prevent the spread of infections and decrease the risk of getting sick, it is important to frequently wash your hands. FDA reminds consumers to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after coughing, sneezing, or blowing one's nose. If soap and water are not readily available, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) recommends consumers use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. FDA reminds consumers that no drugs, including hand sanitizers, are approved to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Tips on How to Use Hand Sanitizer



Do not use hand sanitizer if your hands are visibly dirty or greasy; wash your hands with soap and water instead.



If you use hand sanitizers, read and follow the Drug Facts label, particularly the warnings section.



Rub hand sanitizer all over your hands, making sure to get between your fingers and on the back of your hands.



Do not wipe or rinse off the hand sanitizer before it is dry. Rub your hands until they feel completely dry before performing activities that may involve heat, sparks, static electricity, or open flames.



Do not make your own hand sanitizer. The FDA does not recommend that consumers make their own hand sanitizer. If made incorrectly, hand sanitizer can cause adverse events such as skin burns.

Tips on Safety Related to Hand Sanitizer Use

FDA is warning consumers and health care professionals that the agency has seen a sharp increase in [hand sanitizer products](#) that are labeled to contain ethanol (also known as ethyl alcohol) but that have tested positive for methanol or 1-propanol contamination. Methanol and 1-propanol are toxic substances that can be life-threatening when ingested.



Check your hand sanitizer with the FDA's [searchable list](#). If the name, manufacturer, or National Drug Code (NDC) number matches one of the companies or products on the list, the FDA urges consumers to immediately stop using the hand sanitizer. Dispose of the hand sanitizer bottle in a hazardous waste container, if available, or dispose of as recommended by local waste management and recycling centers. Do not flush or pour these products down the drain or mix with other liquids.



Do not drink hand sanitizer. This is particularly important for young children, especially toddlers, who may be attracted by the pleasant smell or brightly colored bottles of hand sanitizer.



Children are at higher risk of accidentally swallowing hand sanitizer, and due to their smaller body size, are at high risk for health problems after swallowing hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer should be stored out of reach of children. Children should be supervised when using hand sanitizer.

Consumers who have been exposed to hand sanitizer contaminated with methanol or 1-propanol and are experiencing symptoms should seek immediate medical treatment for potential reversal of toxic effects. Methanol exposure can result in nausea, vomiting, headache, blurred vision, permanent blindness, seizures, coma, permanent damage to the nervous system or death. Ingesting 1-propanol can cause central nervous system (CNS) depression, which can result in death. Symptoms of 1-propanol exposure can include confusion, decreased consciousness, and slowed pulse and breathing. Call your doctor if you experience a serious reaction to hand sanitizer. Health care professionals and patients are encouraged to report adverse events or side effects related to the use of these products to the [FDA's MedWatch Safety Information and Adverse Event](#).

See [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Resources for Health Professionals](#) for more information.