



Health Alert



Stop using skin lightening products containing mercury

Recent tests show that some skin lightening products (also called skin bleaching or brightening or fade products) have high levels of mercury. Being exposed to the mercury in these products could cause serious health problems.

Unborn babies, infants, and children are very sensitive to mercury. Pregnant women and women of child-bearing age should avoid being exposed to mercury.

What should you do?

Check the label on your skin lightening product. If the product has mercury in it (also known as “calomel,” “mercuric,” “mercurous,” or “mercurio”) **OR** if the label does **NOT** list what is in the product:

1. Stop using the product now. If you have been using a product with mercury in it, your body will naturally get rid of the mercury over time.
2. Do not throw the product in the trash. If it has mercury in it, it can harm others if it gets into the environment.
3. Take the product to a household hazardous waste site. You can find the nearest site in the phone book or on the website of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency at www.pca.state.mn.us (search for household hazardous waste).
4. If you have questions, call the Poison Control Center, 1-800-222-1222. It is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and it offers language interpretation services.

To see photos of products that were found to contain mercury, visit <http://www.health.state.mn.us/topics/skin/>.



Environmental Health Division
625 Robert Street N. P.O. Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
651-201-4897
www.health.state.mn.us

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