

On Household Alcohol

Most everyone in the U.S. has some derivative of alcohol in the house whether it comes in the form of rubbing alcohol, isopropyl alcohol, or is masked in mouthwash or even cold remedies. Isopropyl alcohol has been used for generations as a method of sterilizing wounds, cuts, or even cleaning countertops. And while its use in ordinary in this country, in other countries like New Zealand and Canada and throughout parts of Europe, it is not so readily available. In fact, it can cost as much as \$40 for a small 8 ounce container only available by order or special request from the pharmacist.

Why such a discrepancy in the United States where it is sold on supermarket shelves for as little as 50cents for a 16 ounce container? Lenient standards are often viewed as one of the American freedoms but this lack of regulation may be costly to the health and wellness of countless millions.

Isopropyl alcohol is literally a conveyor belt for heavy metals. Heavy metals accumulate in the human body at ever increasing rates in this modern day and are accumulating faster than the human body is capable of eliminating them, leading to a wide variety of health maladies that run the gamut from psoriasis to cancer.

Isopropyl alcohol is one of the main ingredients used to formulate crystal meth (methamphetamine), a noxious drug that mixes other toxic ingredients such as nail polish remover, crystal drain cleaner, bleach, battery acid, and others. One of the most addicting drugs on the street, crystal meth has the capacity to destroy lives more quickly than any illicit drug currently on the market. This helps to understand why other countries limit the circulation of some or all of these chemical compounds. Hidden in other over the counter products, alcohol is beginning to be recognized for the culprit it is.

"Alcohol in mouthwash may raise cancer risk: Australian researchers say mouthwash containing alcohol increases the risk of developing oral cancer. The report, published in the Australian Dental Journal, suggests mouthwash be made available only by prescription. Michael McCullough of Melbourne University said the alcohol may increase the ability of cancer causing compounds to attack the lining of the mouth, the Australian Broadcasting Corp. reported Monday. He said dentists need to be aware of the risks. "If they are going to recommend alcohol-containing products then they recommend it for a good reason, for a short period of time," he said. Jim Bishop of the New South Wales Cancer Institute, however, said there needs to be more research on the issue. "We don't know what sort of risk we're talking about with people who use mouthwash regularly. ... it might be quite low or it might be high so we need to know the degree of risk that's involved," he told ABC News."

There is a simple and inexpensive alternative to using many of the products that contain alcohol. An over the counter bottle of 3% peroxide comes at under a dollar and has a variety of uses. For starters, to be used as an effective mouthwash, hold one capful in the mouth for 10 minutes daily, gargle and spit it out. It assists with canker, cold sores and toothaches. Used as toothpaste it will keep teeth whiter without expensive toothpastes and the risk of stripping down the enamel. Soaking toothbrushes in peroxide keeps them free of germs. It is also effective at treating fungus, boils, and healing stubborn skin infections or cuts. It can be used to treat ear infections by using a half capful once a day and swishing it around in the outer ear, careful to not let it flow inside the ear canal and then shaking the head to get any excess moisture out. Effective if you have a cold or plugged sinuses, use a 50/50 mixture with water, tilt your head back and spray into nostrils. Hold for a few minutes then blow your nose into a tissue. Peroxide is a terrific disinfectant and can be used to disinfect your countertops or cutting board killing salmonella and other harmful bacteria. Use it in lieu of its more toxic household neighbor, bleach, to be used for general household cleaning or even added to laundry for whitening. Highly effective to remove blood on clothing or carpet, simply pour directly on the soiled spot. Let it sit for a minute, then rub it and rinse with cold water repeating as necessary.

Why the U.S. allows the use and sale of over the counter isopropyl alcohol or of products containing alcohol is not understood but the hazard is not worth the risk. A simple substitution can easily be made that does not pose a health threat to you or to your family. Be an informed consumer and read the labels and avoid products that contain alcohol in its many forms.



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