

Teens & Hand Sanitizers

Intentional Misuse and Abuse

The Issue –

- Recently, poison centers and emergency rooms have noticed a troubling new trend – teens drinking ethanol-based hand sanitizers to get drunk.

The Facts -

- Keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps to avoid getting sick and spreading germs.¹
- The CDC recommends using alcohol-based hand sanitizers with 60% to 95% ethanol or isopropanol² when soap and water is not available for hand washing.
- Drinking alcohol-based hand sanitizer can result in alcohol poisoning.



The Symptoms –

- **Alcohol poisoning is dangerous and can cause death!** Effects of too much alcohol include confusion, vomiting, slow or irregular breathing, pale skin, low body temperature, and unconsciousness.

The Actions –

- Talk to your teens about the dangers of drinking alcohol.
- Explain why alcohol poisoning is not a laughing matter.
- If you think someone has drunk hand sanitizer to get high, call **1-800-222-1222** to reach the experts at the poison center. **Don't wait for symptoms to develop!**

¹ www.cdc.gov/handwashing

² Emerging Infectious Diseases: Vol 12, No 3, March 2006

