



Prescriptions for PREVENTION

Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit



Mercury in Skin Creams



Did you know?

Mercury is a chemical that can harm people's health. It is sometimes added to skincare products after it has left the manufacturer to lighten skin and remove blemishes. Mercury can enter your body through your skin or from the air in your home. This can put your family at risk, especially those who are pregnant and children. These products are often sold in small markets or online and may not have clear or accurate labels.



Do

- Visit the [Skincare Products Containing Mercury web page](#) to learn about which products to avoid.
- Put mercury-containing products in a sealed, plastic bag and dispose of as household hazardous waste. Visit [CalRecycle](#) to see where your County's hazardous waste site is.
- If you believe you had an exposure, ask a doctor or care provider for mercury tests in blood and urine.
 - Contact CDPH at (510) 981-4354 or send an email to AskEHIB@cdph.ca.gov
 - If you are experiencing a poisoning emergency, call Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222. If someone collapses, has a seizure, has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, call 911 right away.



Don't

- Don't use or sell any cosmetics from this [list of mercury-containing products](#) provided by the CDPH.
 - If you have cosmetics with mercury, stop using the product immediately.
- Don't use any skincare products made for lightening or whitening the skin, particularly if they are from outside the U.S. or Canada.
- Don't purchase or use products with homemade labels or missing labels.
- Don't purchase products from individuals, online markets, swap meets, flea markets or specialty stores outside the country.
- Don't forget about [other sources of mercury such as through your food](#). Choose fish that are low in mercury and always check local fish advisories if you eat what you catch.



For more information, scan the code or visit: <https://wspehsu.ucsf.edu/projects/prescriptions-for-prevention>

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