Hidden Dangers of Hand Sanitizers

(NaturalNews – Zach C. Miller) Lately, it seems that every supermarket has a hand-sanitizing station prominently displayed near the doors. In fact, the trend of using hand sanitizers has really ramped up in recent years, with more people carrying around their own personal-size versions of the stuff around with them.

And why not? Hand sanitizers seem like the perfect way to stay clean and disinfect on the go and don't seem to have any downside. Unfortunately, there are some hidden down sides lurking in supposedly "clean" hand sanitizers that could lead to trouble with regular and repeated use. As you'll see below, finding out the real truth about products we use daily is vital, especially when matters of health and well-being are concerned.

Triclosan

Triclosan is antibacterial chemical agent added mainly to soaps and personal care and cleaning products. Strangely, it's also found in clothing, cookware, furniture and toys in an attempt to reduce bacteria levels. Research on triclosan has raised questions about potential hazards to human health. Triclosan has been shown to disrupt hormone regulation, disrupt immune system function and contribute to the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria (i.e. superbugs). Indeed, the use of triclosan is contributing to an epidemic of antibiotic resistance. This happens when bacteria are regularly exposed to antibacterial agents; the bacteria adapt and grow stronger, more resistant and more immune.

Parabens

Parabens are ubiquitously found in many personal care products such as shampoo, conditioner, body wash, soaps, hand sanitizers and lotions for the purpose of discouraging the growth of microbes. If you look at the label of personal care products, you'll see one or more of these names: ethylparaben, butylparaben, methylparaben and propylparaben. Unfortunately, parabens are linked to endocrine disruption, skin irritation, reproductive toxicity, immunotoxicity and cancer. Parabens also mimic estrogen by binding to estrogen receptors on cells, and they increase the expression of genes regulated by estradiol, a natural form of estrogen. Because parabens are used to kill microbes in water-based products, they inherently contain toxicity for cells in general.

Chemically synthesized artificial fragrances

Most hand sanitizers have a fragrance, and that means that they are very likely to be full of toxic chemicals. Because fragrances are considered to be "trade secrets," companies aren't required to disclose what ingredients they contain. That means that they can be created from just about anything – including hundreds of dangerous chemical compounds. Artificial and chemical fragrances have been associated with allergies, dermatitis, respiratory distress, hormone disruption and potentially negative effects on the reproductive system. The solution here is to look for unscented hand sanitizers to avoid chemically synthesized fragrances. But even unscented hand sanitizers may still contain triclosan and parabens; if you look at the label and see the word *antibacterial*, it means that your hand sanitizer likely contains triclosan and you should inspect the ingredients label to make sure.

Better options and solutions

While not as convenient or trendy, getting back to basics and just using soap and water is really a better, time-tested way to clean your hands. But there are also natural hand sanitizers appearing on the market which don’t contain yucky chemicals. It’s always nice to support companies that create products that have ingredients in them that you can actually pronounce…

Sources:

http://www.thealternativedaily.com
http://www.organicauthority.com
http://www.mayoclinic.org
http://safecosmetics.org
http://science.naturalnews.com