

Triclosan Fact Sheet

Triclosan is used to kill bacteria. It was previously a common ingredient in liquid soaps labeled as “antibacterial” or “antimicrobial,” but this use was banned by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as of September 2017. This is because there are no extra health benefits of using soap with triclosan compared to ordinary soap, and the wide use of antibacterials poses health concerns. Triclosan is still used in other personal care products, such as some toothpaste and cosmetics, although certain companies are phasing it out. It is also added to many household products and building materials.

Triclosan is found in

- Consumer products, including:
 - Housewares, such as cutting boards, serving utensils, storage containers, humidifiers, and vacuum cleaners.
 - Home furnishings, such as mattress and pillow covers, shower curtains, and rugs.
 - Children’s toys and sporting goods, such as exercise, playground, camping, and boating equipment.
- Some personal care products, including some toothpaste and cosmetics like blush and eyeshadow; and combs, brushes, and razors.
- Building materials, such as some countertops, caulking, concrete, tiles, flooring, and bathroom fixtures.

Possible health concerns

Triclosan:

- May interfere with the body’s natural hormones.
- May make it harder for antibiotics to fight infections. This is because overuse of triclosan and other antibacterials may cause changes in bacteria that make them harder to kill.

Possible ways to reduce exposure

- Avoid personal care products that list triclosan on the label, unless you have a medical reason for using them. For example, toothpaste with triclosan may help prevent gingivitis (inflammation of the gums).
- Avoid products labeled “antibacterial” or “antimicrobial.”
- For housewares and other consumer products, look for untreated materials, which could include wood, glass, stainless steel, and natural fabrics like wool. If you can’t tell whether a product has been treated with triclosan or other antibacterials, contact the manufacturer.

For More Information:

FDA consumer information: <https://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm378393.htm>