Silica Gel

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Silica Gel: Used to prevent moisture damage and avoid spoilage of goods. Often included in packing materials for pharmaceutical products, camera equipment or shoes. Also known as desiccants.

What is it: Silicone dioxide in the form of granules or powder (resembling sugar).

Is it toxic? Silica gel is non-toxic. Although these packets often say ‘DO NOT EAT’ on them, the concern is it that it can be a choking hazard.

Health Effects:

Eyes: Possible irritation if particles left in eye.

Ingestion: Poisoning is not expected from ingestion of beads or powder. Swallowing the
packaging could be a choking hazard.

**What to do:**

**Eyes:** Rinse eyes with lukewarm water with one of the following methods:

- Pour a gentle stream of water from a jug or clean teapot over the eye from the inside corner by the nose, across the eye, flowing out towards the ear.
- Submerge eye in a container (bowl, sink) of lukewarm water. Have patient open and close eye.
- Eye may be irrigated in the shower if this can be accomplished without delay.
- Young children may be wrapped like a mummy in a towel with arms at side and held over sink or tub or laid on counter during flushing.

**Ingestion:** Rinse out mouth and drink a small glass of water or milk. Contact the Poison Control Centre if the entire package has been swallowed.

Do not induce vomiting. **If symptoms persist after above first aid measures, contact the Poison Control Centre.**

**How can I prevent exposure?** Dispose of silica gel packages when no longer needed.

**Need more information:** Call the Poison Control Centre.

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