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Silica Gel

Article type:

poison information

Access:

public



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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Keywords:
silica gel

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Source URL (retrieved on 2022-07-01 13:13): <http://www.dpic.org/faq/silica-gel>