
Key Points

- UNM Poison Control reports methanol overdose cases in Northwest counties in NM.
- As of June 17, 2020 there were 7 known cases of methanol overdose in NM related to consumption of hand sanitizer.
- Patients reported drinking alleged bootlegged hand sanitizer.
- Presentation may be similar to diabetic ketoacidosis.
- We are sharing information to help you respond should you see a patient with decreased consciousness, visual disturbances including fixed dilated pupils, vomiting and abdominal pain who may have consumed hand sanitizer or other non-beverage alcohol.
- Healthcare professionals who suspect methanol toxicity should immediately notify the NM Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222.

Background

UNM Poison control reports 7 cases of methanol overdose in San Juan County and McKinley County. Of these, 2 have died from methanol overdose, 1 is blind due to methanol overdose, and 4 are in critical condition. The first case was on May 7th. All other cases are since May 29, 2020. Cases reported that they drank alleged bootlegged hand sanitizer. Arizona Poison Control also reports similar cases in the Northeast corner of their state.

Methanol Overdose

Methanol is a toxic form of alcohol with high risk of blindness, kidney failure, and death. Treatment includes stabilizing the patient and administration of an antidote (fomepizole, or ethanol if fomepizole is not available). Best prognosis occurs with early treatment. Alcohol may be administered intravenously or orally. Best prognosis occurs with early treatment. Please see https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ersbdb/emergencyresponsecard_29750029.html for additional information on methanol, methanol toxicity, and treatment for methanol overdose.

EPIDEMIOLOGY AND RESPONSE

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