

SKIN PRODUCT SAFETY: HYDROQUINONE

Skin lightening products containing the ingredient hydroquinone may cause harm.

Did You KNOW?

Skin lightening products with **hydroquinone** are **NOT** FDA-approved for over-the-counter sale in the U.S.

Hydroquinone is an active ingredient in **skin lightening products** used to:

- Correct uneven skin tone
- Remove dark spots, blemishes, and wrinkles

Serious side effects from the use of these products have been reported:

- Skin discoloration (ochronosis) that may be permanent
- Rashes
- Facial swelling



STAY SAFE!

Only use skin products containing hydroquinone when **prescribed** by a **licensed health care provider**.

Before purchasing or using nonprescription skin products, **check the product label** for **hydroquinone**.

Drug Facts	
Active Ingredients Hydroquinone (2.0%)	Purpose Skin Bleaching Agent
Uses	
• Lightens dark discolorations in the skin such as freckles, age and liver spots	
• Even out skin tone and reduce skin discoloration	
Warnings	
For external use only	
Avoid eye	

Get the Skin Facts! by visiting www.fda.gov/SkinFacts.

SKIN PRODUCT SAFETY: MERCURY

Skin lightening products containing the ingredient mercury may cause harm.

Did You KNOW?

The FDA has **banned** the use of **mercury** in skin lightening products.

Using a skin product with **mercury** may cause **serious health problems**, such as:

- Damage to the eyes, lungs, and kidneys
- Damage to the digestive, immune, and nervous systems
- Skin rashes and infections
- Brown-gray skin discoloration

Mercury poisoning can also result in coma and even death.

Check product ingredient labels for terms identifying mercury:

- Mercurous chloride
- Calomel
- Mercuric
- Mercurio
- Hg



DO NOT USE or PURCHASE products with these ingredients.

If you or anyone in your family has been exposed to mercury:



Call Poison Control at **1-(800)-222-1222** and contact your health care provider **immediately**.



Thoroughly wash your hands and other parts of your body that have been in contact with mercury.



Dispose of skin products with mercury at your local hazardous waste center.

SKIN PRODUCT SAFETY: IDENTIFYING UNSAFE PRODUCTS

Skin lightening products containing the ingredients hydroquinone or mercury may cause harm. The over-the-counter sale of these products is illegal in the U.S. Read skin product labels to identify ingredients before purchasing.

BEWARE

The FDA has received reports of *serious side effects* from the use of **cosmetic** and **nonprescription** (over-the-counter) skin products containing **hydroquinone** or **mercury**. The sale of these products is illegal in the U.S.

IDENTIFY

Skin lightening products may be identified with descriptions like:

1 Skin brightening soap

2 Skin evening lotion

3 Skin whitening powder

4 Spot correcting cream

5 Chemical peel

To treat skin conditions such as:

- Melasma
- Acne
- Freckles
- Wrinkles



CHECK

Before purchasing or using a skin lightening product, **check the label** to see if it contains **hydroquinone** or **mercury**.

Mercury may also be listed as:



- Mercurous chloride
- Calomel
- Mercuric
- Mercurio
- Hg

The FDA advises against the use of these products and encourages consumers to consult with a health care provider about treatment options.

Be sure to avoid products with no labels, handmade labels, or labels not written in English.