

# SAFETY ALERT

## RESOLVED: HEALTHCARE PLUS HAND SANITIZER WARNING LABEL



**RESOLVED:** While risk was deemed to be minimal, given the concerns of safety to pregnant and breastfeeding women, as well as the odour and general comfort, Supply Chain has removed all of the referenced Healthcare Plus hand sanitizer from inventory, and will no longer supply any hand sanitizer containing technical grade ethanol. Any units that continue to use it may return any unused bottles to their local Stores, or dispose of at their discretion. Supply Chain has a variety of products available throughout the province made with USP/pharmaceutical grade alcohol as a replacement.

### FOR ACTION BY:

ALL SHA

### ACTION DATE:

May 21, 2020

### RESOLVED DATE:

June 17, 2020

### STATUS:

- Active
- Resolved

### CONTACT:

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### SITUATION

HealthCare Plus Hand Sanitizer bears the label warning “Do Not Use If Pregnant or Breastfeeding”.

### BACKGROUND

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for hand sanitizer has increased dramatically. This demand has resulted in shortages of key ingredients used in hand sanitizer, such as USP-ethanol (or “pharmaceutical-grade”). In order to ensure that there is an adequate supply of hand sanitizer, Health Canada has authorized manufacturers to use technical-grade ethanol in the hand sanitizer that they produce.

With this change, Health Canada has released a new risk [assessment as well as new labelling requirements](#)—hand sanitizer containing technical-grade ethanol shall have a warning label stating that it is contraindicated for pregnant and breastfeeding women. This will impact the HealthCare Plus brand hand sanitizer used in Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) facilities.

### ASSESSMENT

- Your safety is our priority. Technical-grade ethanol, now being used in place of pharmaceutical-grade ethanol in the manufacturing of the product, is safe and approved by Health Canada.
- Staff may notice a stronger or different odor associated with the products manufactured with technical-grade ethanol.
- HealthCare Plus brand hand sanitizer with a clear or black top has the warning which says: “Do Not Use If Pregnant or Breastfeeding.”
- Supply Chain is actively pursuing an ample and appropriate supply of Hand Sanitizers.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure staff and physicians are knowledgeable and aware of labels with new/existing products
- Discontinue the use of this hand sanitizer only if an appropriate alternative can be sourced
- Discontinue use of the hand sanitizer with the high risk population (pregnant and breastfeeding individual) while allowing those with no risk to continue to use it
- If you would like to consider reducing your use of the hand sanitizer products impacted by this new assessment, we suggest that you replace use of hand sanitizer with warm water and soap, where practical and possible

### FOLLOW-UP

Managers, Directors and Supply Chain to follow up with their applicable areas to ensure everyone has received the communication and are aware of the situation.

