Toluene

Why am I being warned about potential exposure to toluene?

- Toluene is on the Proposition 65 list because it can cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. Significant exposure to toluene during pregnancy may affect the baby’s development.
- Proposition 65 requires businesses to determine if they must provide a warning about significant exposure to listed chemicals.

What is toluene?

Toluene is a solvent used to make some paint thinners, adhesives, and nail care products. It is also added to gasoline to improve its octane rating.

How does exposure to toluene occur?

- Products that contain toluene can release the chemical into the air, where it can be inhaled.
- Occasional use of these products, for example, when doing household projects, or visiting a nail salon, does not typically result in significant exposure to toluene.
- Toluene may be deliberately inhaled from some products for its mood-altering effects. This is often referred to as “glue sniffing,” and is a highly addictive and dangerous form of substance abuse.
- Smoking a hookah (also known as a waterpipe, shisha, or narghile) can expose you and those around you to toluene.
- During pregnancy, toluene can pass from mother to baby.

How can I reduce my exposure to toluene?

✔️ When using products that may contain toluene, always follow the manufacturer’s instructions and safety precautions on the product label.

✔️ Make sure there is adequate ventilation in the workplace or other area where you use products that may contain toluene.

❌ Do not use hookahs or spend time in places where hookah smoking occurs.

❌ Do not deliberately sniff glue or other products that contain solvents like toluene. Keep these products away from children. To prevent substance abuse, monitor use of these products by teens.
For more information:

**General Fact Sheets and Resources**

- US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
  Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)
  - Public Health Statement for Toluene
  - Toluene – ToxFAQs
    [https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxFAQs/tfacts56.pdf](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxFAQs/tfacts56.pdf)

- National Institute of Health (NIH), National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
  - Inhalants DrugFacts. What are Inhalants?
    [https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/inhalants](https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/inhalants)

**Scientific Information about Toluene**

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
  Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)
  - Proposed Priority Product: Nail Products Containing Toluene
    [https://dtsc.ca.gov/scp/proposed-nail-products-containing-toluene/](https://dtsc.ca.gov/scp/proposed-nail-products-containing-toluene/)

**Proposition 65**

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
  Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
  - Proposition 65: Background
    [https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/faq](https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/faq)
  - Proposition 65: The List of Chemicals
    [https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals](https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals)
  - Proposition 65: Fact Sheets
    [https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/fact-sheets](https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/fact-sheets)