

From: [California Safe Cosmetics Program](#)
Subject: FDA finds methylene chloride in gel nail polish remover products
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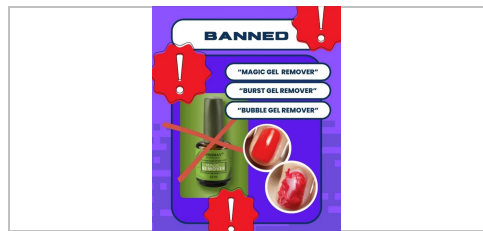
California Safe Cosmetics Program (CSCP)



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US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) finds methylene chloride (DCM) in products

In 2024, the [US Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) tested gel nail polish remover products and found several containing methylene chloride (also called dichloromethane or DCM). DCM is a prohibited ingredient in cosmetics in the US. Given its presence in gel nail polish removers, nail salon workers and their clients are at risk. [DCM may cause neurological toxicity, liver injury, cancer or death. DCM can be inhaled and enter the lungs or be absorbed by the skin.](#) Consumers should avoid these products, which can be found for sale online.



The above image is from the [California Board of Barbering and Cosmetology's 9/11/2025 Instagram post](#). Products using DCM are often described as "bubbling" or "bursting" when applied.

Beware of nail polish removers advertised or described using words like "magic" or "bursting"

Consumers should be wary of gel nail polish removers that promise quick or instant results. Words like "magic", "burst", bubbles/bubbling" can indicate that a product uses DCM. Check the ingredients label of your products for "methylene chloride", "dichloromethane" or "methyl bichloride." However, products not listing DCM in their ingredients have been tested and found to contain the chemical. DCM can also have a noticeable sweet odor.

Recommendations

Rather than using products with DCM, the California Board of Barbering and Cosmetology advises using the following method to remove gel nail polish:

- File off the topcoat of the gel polish.
- Apply cotton balls soaked in acetone to the nails.
- Wrap them with foil to hold them in place.
- Allow the nails to soak for 10-15 minutes.
- Gently push off the softened gel.

In addition to avoiding products containing DCM, [guidance by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\)](#) suggests using appropriate ventilation, personal protection equipment and keeping chemical containers closed.

Want to report a product or concern?

The FDA's notice provides the [instructions for consumers to report products here](#).

Visit the [California Safe Cosmetics Products Database](#) to learn more about other harmful ingredients in cosmetics and personal care products.

Questions? Contact CSCP at SafeCosmetics@cdph.ca.gov
www.cdph.ca.gov/Cosmetics

850 Marina Bay Parkway, Richmond, CA 94804, Richmond, CA 94804

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