

The buzz about too much hand sanitizer

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• Dr. Joette Giovinco
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A lot of us have hand sanitizers around the house, and even at work.

They do a great job at killing germs, like the flu bug. But some of these products are now generating quite a buzz.

Some new research out of the University of Florida finds that our body is soaking up the alcohol in some of these hand sanitizers. It turns out that if you use them a lot, you could test positive in a test for alcohol.

Doctor Gary Reisfield is with the University of Florida College of Medicine.

He studied 11 people who are non-drinkers and had them sanitize every five minutes, for 10 hours a day, three days in a row.

It's just as often as a nurse would use hand sanitizers.

He then tested their urine.

"The levels of one of the biomarkers we found was consistent with the use of moderate amounts of alcohol consumed over the past couple hours to the past couple days," Reisfield said.

Resfield says we break down ethyl alcohol in hand sanitizers the same way we break down alcoholic drinks.

"Anyone out there who needs to abstain from alcohol needs to be cognizant about alcohol that may be hidden in products in hand washing gels, hair sprays, food stuffs, and cosmetic products," he said.

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