

Trend of drinking hydrogen peroxide can be deadly, doctors warn

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It's meant to boost your health but Minnesota doctors caution that this alternative health remedy can send you or a loved one to the emergency room.

Six people have been treated at Hennepin County Medical Center this year for injuries sustained after accidentally drinking highly concentrated [hydrogen peroxide](#).

Although these were accidental cases in which the patients thought the odorless, colorless liquid was water, there are people intentionally drinking diluted hydrogen peroxide as a natural treatment for sinus infections, inflammation and other ailments.

"The way people describe it is that they take 3 drops of concentrated peroxide and dissolve it in about eight ounces of water and take it three times a day," explained Dr. Ann Arens, a medical toxicologist at the Minnesota Poison Control System. "There are a bunch of websites and YouTube videos. There's no science behind any of it helping. There's no benefit of doing it and it really opens you up to a lot of potential harm."

Doctors have seen more cases of hydrogen peroxide poisoning in the last two months, she said.

The hydrogen peroxide in these cases is stronger than the 3 to 5 percent concentration usually found in the drug store. In these cases, the bottle is labeled "food grade quality" and contains 35 percent [hydrogen peroxide](#).

"It burns as soon as you drink it," Arens said.

Consuming the liquid can burn holes in the esophagus and stomach, and can create oxygen bubbles that can be released in the blood stream.

When that happens, explained Dr. Stephen Hendriksen, an emergency medicine doctor at HCMC, the bubbles can travel to the brain and cause seizures and stroke-like symptoms.

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