

**Ministry of Social Affairs and  
Health**

**Ministry of the Economy and  
Finance**

Directorate General for Health

Directorate General for Competition,  
Consumer Affairs,  
and Fraud Control

Paris, 14 December 2018

## **Press release**

### **Preparation and handling of slime: the health authorities call for continued vigilance**

**ANSES, the DGS and the DGCCRF are reiterating the risks associated with preparing and handling "slime", a sticky and elastic putty for kneading that is very popular with children and adolescents. The repeated and prolonged handling of this putty can cause skin irritations and allergies that are sometimes severe. From January to May 2018, the number of reported cases was double the number for all of 2017. In May, an initial alert was issued following cases of skin lesions reported by the French poison control centres, the Revidal-Gerda dermatology-allergology vigilance network and the AllergOS network. In particular, the health authorities wish to draw attention to the risks associated with "home-made" slime, which exposes users to direct contact with products such as detergents and glues misused for this purpose. Users are also reminded of the importance of complying with the precautions for use indicated on ready-to-use slime and kits sold in shops.**

Several cases of skin irritations and allergies, sometimes severe, associated with the preparation and handling of slime have been reported by the French poison control centres, the Revidal-Gerda dermatology-allergology vigilance network and the AllergOS network. These include skin and nail damage, burns, redness, eczema and itching. ANSES has analysed the toxicovigilance data associated with exposure to slime in order to identify the cases and characterise the symptoms. In its report published today, the Agency points out that the number of cases reported to the poison control centres had already reached 87 in the period from 1 January to 15 May 2018, compared with a total of 91 cases for all of 2017.

Slime is popular with children, who knead the putty for hours. Slime putty is marketed in ready-to-use form or in kits of ingredients to be mixed. It can also be prepared at home: tutorials on this subject have proliferated on the Internet.

However, the recipe for this "home-made" slime contains solutions for washing eyes or contact lenses, as well as chemicals such as laundry detergent, other detergents and glues. These products contain substances that may be toxic to health, such as boric acid, which has been classified as a Category 1B

reprotoxic substance (toxic for fertility and embryofoetal development) under European Regulation (EC) 1272/2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures.

The repeated and prolonged handling of these products can lead to severe contact dermatitis, because they may contain skin allergenic or irritant preservatives such as isothiazolinones. Some solvents can also cause irritation of the eyes and airways, and are toxic to the central nervous system.

The ready-to-use slime and the kits marketed for children avoid using these chemicals. However, the DGCCRF is continuing its checks in order to remove from the market any slime that does not comply with the regulations, and to date, out of the 44 products sampled in 2018, 14 contained boron at levels above the authorised limit, and have already been recalled and withdrawn from the market.

**Given the enthusiasm for this product, ANSES, the DGS and the DGCCRF are calling for continued vigilance when preparing "home-made" slime, which may lead to exposure to hazardous chemicals.**

**The health authorities also invite parents and those supervising users to ensure compliance with the precautions for use supplied with these products (ready-to-use slime or preparation kits).**

**Lastly, the health authorities reiterate that the repeated and prolonged handling of slime is not without health risks.**

Poison control centres: <http://www.centres-antipoison.net/>

---

#### Press liaison

ANSES: +33 (0)1 49 77 13 77 / 22 26 - [presse@anses.fr](mailto:presse@anses.fr)

DGS: [presse-dgs@sante.gouv.fr](mailto:presse-dgs@sante.gouv.fr) - Tel.: +33 (0)1 40 56 84 00 - @AlerteSanitaire

DGCCRF: +33 (0)1 44 97 23 91 - [communication@dgccrf.finances.gouv.fr](mailto:communication@dgccrf.finances.gouv.fr)