

## Mix-up Between Skin Prep Solution and Adhesive Remover

PA-PSRS received two reports from one hospital describing a mix-up between skin prep solution and adhesive remover. A hospital staff member mistakenly used an adhesive remover on two patients instead of a skin prep solution prior to applying Holter monitor electrodes. Both events resulted in the patients experiencing erythematous skin reactions at the electrode sites.

items and also forms a film on skin to help reduce friction when those items are removed from the patient. The Smith & Nephew adhesive remover is used to soften the adhesives on items such as tapes and to remove adhesive residue.



Figure 1. Current Style of Packaging for Skin Prep (top) and Adhesive Remover (bottom)



Figure 2. New Style of Packaging for Skin Prep (top) and Adhesive Remover (bottom)

The events occurred because the packaging for both the skin prep and adhesive remover are very similar in appearance (see Figure 1). The skin prep and adhesive remover are manufactured by Smith & Nephew, Inc. (Cat. Nos. 420400 and 403100, respectively) and have the same orange and white pattern with black lettering.

The Smith & Nephew skin prep is a liquid prep solution used to prepare skin for tapes or similar adhesive

In response to prior reports of the packages looking similar and in response to the events above, Smith &

This article is reprinted from the *PA-PSRS Patient Safety Advisory*, Vol. 3, No. 1—March 2006. The Advisory is a publication of the Pennsylvania Patient Safety Authority, produced by ECRI & ISMP under contract to the Authority as part of the Pennsylvania Patient Safety Reporting System (PA-PSRS).

Copyright 2006 by the Patient Safety Authority. This publication may be reprinted and distributed without restriction, provided it is printed or distributed in its entirety and without alteration. Individual articles may be reprinted in their entirety and without alteration provided the source is clearly attributed.

To see other articles or issues of the Advisory, visit our web site at [www.psa.state.pa.us](http://www.psa.state.pa.us). Click on "Advisories" in the left-hand menu bar.

### **Mix-up Between Skin Prep Solution and Adhesive Remover (Continued)**

Nephew took steps to redesign the packaging for the skin prep and adhesive remover (see Figure 2). The front of the redesigned skin prep package now contains a green block of color containing the Cat. No. 420400, and the front of the redesigned adhesive remover package contains a maroon color containing the Cat. No. 403100. Both packages use a larger black font to distinguish one from the other. According to Smith & Nephew, the new style packaging has been implemented. However, it may not be available in the market until the second quarter of 2006 due to inventory depletions in the market.

Healthcare facilities that use the above products can alert users to the information in this article, emphasizing the need to carefully scrutinize the packaging when obtaining either the skin prep solution or the adhesive remover. Until the newly designed packaging is available, consider providing signage or other identifiers near the products to alert users to the similar packaging of these products.



An Independent Agency of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Patient Safety Authority is an independent state agency created by Act 13 of 2002, the Medical Care Availability and Reduction of Error (“Mcare”) Act. Consistent with Act 13, ECRI, as contractor for the PA-PSRS program, is issuing this newsletter to advise medical facilities of immediate changes that can be instituted to reduce serious events and incidents. For more information about the PA-PSRS program or the Patient Safety Authority, see the Authority’s website at [www.psa.state.pa.us](http://www.psa.state.pa.us).



ECRI is an independent, nonprofit health services research agency dedicated to improving the safety, efficacy and cost-effectiveness of healthcare. ECRI’s focus is healthcare technology, healthcare risk and quality management and healthcare environmental management. ECRI provides information services and technical assistance to more than 5,000 hospitals, healthcare organizations, ministries of health, government and planning agencies, and other organizations worldwide.



The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated solely to medication error prevention and safe medication use. ISMP provides recommendations for the safe use of medications to the healthcare community including healthcare professionals, government agencies, accrediting organizations, and consumers. ISMP’s efforts are built on a non-punitive approach and systems-based solutions.