



MY SECRET LIFE
Skin, singer,
aged 42

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Sales of hand sanitizers surging ahead of flu season

Relax News

Friday, 6 November 2009

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As H1N1 threatens to sweep the western hemisphere, or so consumers in the United States believe, they're taking preventive measures by slathering on copious amounts of germ-killing hand sanitizers and stocking up on the antibacterial gels.

According to the latest data from the Nielsen Company, during the last six months, sales of hand sanitizers in the US have skyrocketed. When news of H1N1 outbreaks started to make headlines in March 2009, sales hit a peak in May, subsided during the summer, and jumped again during the four weeks ending October 3. Sales of hand sanitizers reached \$118.4 million, up 70.5 percent over the same period last year, the firm reports.

Using hand sanitizers is widely recommended to prevent the spread of germs. The Centers for Disease Control has also stated that a sanitizer should contain 60 percent alcohol to effectively kill germs on contact.

But studies have also shown that thoroughly washing hands with soap and water could provide some of the same -- and possibly more -- benefits as using antibacterial gels, which some health experts say could cause resistance to bacteria.

Purell, the most popular brand of hand sanitizers in the US and marketed by Gojo Industries in Ohio, supplies most US schools and hospitals and has ramped up production of its product for the upcoming flu season.

Meanwhile, other companies have jumped on the bandwagon, marketing the gels to diverse groups, whether as designer, germ-killing fashion accessories or as essential personal care items.

Some popular brands of hand sanitizers include:

Bath and Body Works Hand Sanitizer: Currently the US's top-selling brand, the scented hand sanitizers are available in multiple fragrances, including pomegranate, melon and sweet pea. (8 oz./\$3.00)

Victoria's Secret Hand Sanitizer: Sold as a key chain in the form of a peace sign, the pink sanitizer is always on hand: it's also available in a pump bottle. (4.2 oz./\$8.00)

Ed Hardy Hand Sanitizer: The famed tattoo artist has a line of alcohol-based sanitizers for the style conscious, enriched with vitamin E and in bottles emblazoned with tattoo-inspired designs. (2.3 oz. / \$5.00, 9.2 z / \$13)

Frais Hand Sanitizer: An Australian line of luxury hand sanitizers that uses aromatherapy and non-toxic moisturizers to kill germs. (15 oz. / \$29.00)

EO Hand Sanitizer: The manufacturers of this plant- and alcohol-based sanitizer claim that sales for its product are up 68 percent from last year. (8 oz. / \$9.99)


Jao Hand Sanitizer: With natural antibacterial agents, this hand sanitizer wins high scores from US *Elle* magazine (4 oz. / \$11.00).

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