



KANE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Health Department warns consumers not to use Illinois firm's Swad brand Sindoor: Product contains high levels of lead**

The Kane County Health Department is warning consumers not to use 3.5 oz. packages of Swad brand sindoor, an orange or red powder used in some traditional South Asian Pacific ceremonies that is applied to the face or scalp, imported by Raja Foods LLC of Skokie, Ill., because the product contains high levels of lead. Although the product was not intended to be sold for food use, its labeling is confusing and implies that it may be used as food. The Illinois Department of Public Health has confirmed two cases of lead poisoning in consumers who used the product as an ingredient in home cooked meals. Other uses of the product, including as a cosmetic, can also be dangerous due to the high lead levels.

“Lead can be toxic to all humans, but women of childbearing age, pregnant women and their unborn children, and young children are especially vulnerable because of the risks it poses to a developing nervous system,” Health Department Executive Director Paul Kuehnert said.

At least 280 packages of Sindoor were distributed to grocery stores that specialize in foods from India in Illinois, Colorado, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin.

(MORE)

Sindoor Lead Warning—Page 2

The front label of the bag states "SWAD BEST TASTE IN TOWN SINDOOR", "FOR RECIPE IDEAS VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [WWW.RAJAFOODS.COM](http://WWW.RAJAFOODS.COM)", and "PRODUCT OF INDIA." The back label states "Imported and Distributed by: Raja Foods, 8110, N. St. Louis Avenue, Skokie, ILL 60076", with a UPC of 0 51179 42236 0 and may have a sticker stating "NONEDIBLE".

Symptoms of lead toxicity include: stomach aches, colic, nausea, vomiting, abnormal irritability, and insomnia. However, people with lead in their blood often do not exhibit symptoms. Permanent damage to the central nervous system from lead exposure can result in learning difficulties in school children as well as cause other long-term health problems such as kidney disease. Anyone who has consumed this product should consult his or her health care provider immediately.

Packages of Sindoor can be returned to the place of purchase for a full refund. Consumers with questions may contact the company at 1-800-800-7923 x 2860.

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