



Celebrate festival of colours safely

Use of chemical-based colours can cause skin allergy .

Eyes can get affected when colours are sprayed or thrown at faces

- If eye irritation persists, consult a doctor*
- In case of skin allergies, smear the exposed portions of the body with a sunscreen lotion or a moisturiser*
- Do not keep Holi colours within easy reach of babies*

You may be getting more than drenched in colours on Holi and if the origin of the colours is not certain, you risk skin allergies and possible eye irritation, both of which can be severe in some persons.

Over the years more chemical-based colours are being sprayed instead of the vegetable dyes used for long.

The chemicals can cause allergies or skin irritation.

Test

There is a simple test to find out if the colours sold in shops are safe or not.

"If they dissolve fast in water, they are safe. If they don't, chances are they contain chemicals that are potentially dangerous," he says.

Apart from the traditional "gulal", bright colours to which aluminum chloride is added have become popular among the young.

This is because they leave shiny residue on the skin and hair. Apart from a temporary irritation, they can affect the pores of the skin for hours or even days and need to be avoided.

Some shops regularly mix "gulal" with powdered sand to add weight and this can get into the eye.

Metallic and lead-based paint and dyes go into some of the colours used during Holi, and these are never meant for use on the skin.

Precautions

House painters and others carefully scrub them off with paint thinners or turpentine after use.

Most modern home decorators make sure their painters wear protective gloves.

Those gleefully playing Holi take no such precautions.

Eyes also get affected when colours are sprayed or thrown onto faces. If eye irritation persists, it should be washed carefully in cold water, and if necessary an eye specialist consulted who may clean the eyes more thoroughly and also prescribe eye drops.

In the case of skin allergies, specialists advise that it may be a good idea to smear all exposed portions of the body with a good sunscreen lotion or a simple moisturiser that protects the skin from direct contact with the colours.

Parents are advised by pediatricians not to keep Holi colours within easy reach of toddlers and babies.

The bright colours may tempt the children to taste them, with disastrous consequences.

We sincerely recommend for use of safe vegetable colours preferably.