

## Contact dermatitis from Do-It-Yourself slime\*

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Dear Editor,

Do-It-Yourself slime (DIY slime) is a current fad among kids and teenagers. Making this homemade goop is as much fun as playing with it, and various tutorials available on YouTube feature instructions for concocting the slime with different textures and appearances.

We report the case of an 11-year-old female patient. After a year playing with DIY slime, she presented erythema, vesicles, and exulcerations on the dorsal aspect of six fingers. The patient was diagnosed with contact dermatitis and instructed to stop handling the product. She was treated with moisturizing cream and mometasone cream, with significant improvement within 25 days (Figure 1).

Homemade or DIY slime is similar to industrialized products (Geleka<sup>®</sup>, Amoeba<sup>®</sup>) and is handmade by children by mixing several substances. Basically, it is made with white school glue, water, and borax. The glue contains polyvinyl acetate, an incomplete plastic. Borax (sodium borate) acts as an “activator” which combines with glue molecules in water to form weak bonds. The molecules then move together but do not harden, becoming an elastic polymer<sup>1</sup>. Boric acid 3% can be substituted for borax or another activator such as detergent or baking soda. The basic recipe can be enhanced by adding other compounds to obtain different textures and color

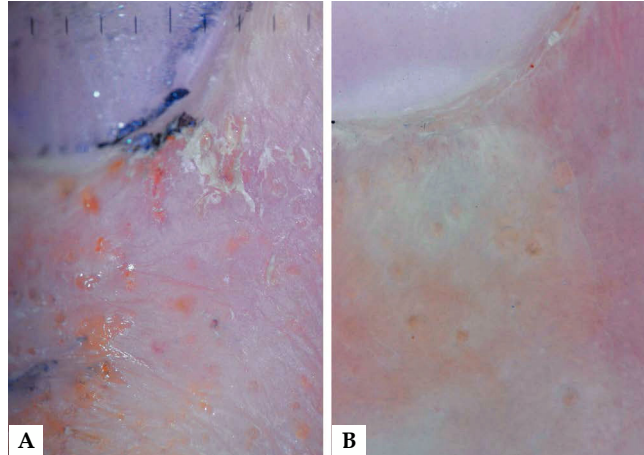


FIGURE 1: Dermoscopy of the finger **A** - day 0, erythema, vesicles, erosions and crusts **B** - day 25, significant improvement

effects. Some common additions are shaving cream (which makes the slime “fluffy”), as well as colorings or dyes, enamels, beads, glitter, and foam. Accidents involving ingestion, inhalation, or contact have been reported recently, mainly on the Internet<sup>1</sup>. Borax, glue, shaving cream, and detergents are toxic if ingested, and the severity varies according to the content and/or amount of the product. Airborne borax powder can irritate eyes, throat, and lungs. Thus, manual contact with these ingredients and/or end product can cause adverse skin reactions such as contact dermatitis. The severity can vary according to the product handled and the duration of exposure. Thus, ready made products with a safety seal are preferred over homemade DIY slime. □

### REFERENCES

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