

To: [5.1.2e] ([5.1.2e]@minvws.nl); [5.1.2e] ([5.1.2e]@minvws.nl); [5.1.5]
 [5.1.5] ([5.1.2e]@minvws.nl)
From: [5.1.2e]
Sent: Wed 3/3/2021 3:41:36 PM
Subject: RE: Nano particles in the Avrox Community masks in Belgium
Received: Wed 3/3/2021 3:41:36 PM

Strak plan

Verzonden met BlackBerry Work(www.blackberry.com)

Van: "[5.1.2e]" <[5.1.2e]@minvws.nl>
Verzonden: 3 mrt. 2021 16:16
Aan: "[5.1.2e]" <[5.1.2e]@minvws.nl>; [5.1.5] <[5.1.2e]@minvws.nl>
Onderwerp: RE: Nano particles in the Avrox Community masks in Belgium

Misschien goed als ik dat even navraag bij RIVM voor medische maskers, en dat de [5.1.2e] dat even navraagt bij de NVWA voor niet-medisch?

Van: [5.1.2e] <[5.1.2e]@minvws.nl>
Verzonden: woensdag 3 maart 2021 15:59
Aan: [5.1.5] <[5.1.2e]@minvws.nl>
Onderwerp: FW: Nano particles in the Avrox Community masks in Belgium

Dag allen,

Ter info stuur ik jullie hierbij een rapport m.b.t. het onderzoek naar de bestanddelen van de in België gratis weggegeven mondkmaskers (die later zijn teruggeroepen).

Goed om te weten dat het gebruik van silver based biocides blijkbaar niet beperkt is tot die specifieke maskers. Er zijn meer maskers op de markt die met zilver zijn bewerkt. Geen flauw idee of dergelijke maskers ook op de Nederlandse markt verkrijgbaar zijn of dat LCH dat soort type maskers ook heeft ingekocht (ik denk het niet?).

Groeten,
 [5.1.2e]

Van: [5.1.2e] <[5.1.2e]@minvws.nl>
Verzonden: woensdag 3 maart 2021 15:37
Aan: [5.1.2e] <[5.1.2e]@minvws.nl>
Onderwerp: FW: Nano particles in the Avrox Community masks in Belgium

Ha [5.1.2e]

Dit bericht voor jullie ter informatie, moeten we hier iets mee?

Groet, [5.1.2e]

Van: [5.1.2e] <[5.1.2e]@ec.europa.eu> <[5.1.2e]@ec.europa.eu>
Verzonden: woensdag 3 maart 2021 15:34
Aan: [5.1.2e] <[5.1.2e]@ec.europa.eu>
Onderwerp: [WARNING : MESSAGE ENCRYPTED]Nano particles in the Avrox Community masks in Belgium

Dear Members of the Health Security Committee,
 Dear colleagues,

Below and attached you will find the information and the report provided by Sciensano Institute, on nano particles in the Avrox Community masks, for your information.

Kind regards,

One of our tasks, within Sciensano, is to signal possible health risks to the competent authorities as soon as possible. In this context, we have launched a pilot project (AgMask) that focusses on the issue of treatments of mouth masks with different forms of silver (ionic, as nanoparticles, in slow release systems) used as antibacterial agents. More info on this project can be found on the website of Sciensano: <https://www.sciensano.be/en/projects/evaluation-types-efficient-use-and-health-risks-application-silver-based-biocides-provide>

Given the first results, our minister of Public health Mr. Frank Vandenbroucke asked us to send you the analytical report (here in attachment) and inform you about our findings concerning silver and titanium dioxide particles in the Avrox community mouth mask (which has been distributed by the Belgian government to the public).

What has already been studied?

In the current sample, we looked specifically at the Avrox mask distributed by the government. In the further course of the study, we will also look at biocide-coated masks from other manufacturers in the European market, as well as disposable masks without coatings. These coatings are allowed by European biocide legislation and are used in many products such as clothing and other textile products because of their anti-bacterial properties.

What do the initial results (not) say?

The initial sample results show that the fibers in the Avrox mask do indeed contain a biocide coating with silver as the active ingredient, as indicated by the manufacturer. However, in the initial study, we also found nanoparticles of silver and titanium dioxide in the masks examined. The titanium dioxide particles are mainly bound in the matrix of the fibers. The silver particles are located on the surface of the fibers. However, the current results do not allow us to estimate whether these nanoparticles are actually released from the masks and to what extent the users are exposed. The methodology for this is still being developed in collaboration with colleagues at the Flemish research institute VITO. The results will not be available in the short term because we are also entering new scientific territory here. If this research were to show that exposure to nanoparticles is possible, it would then have to be examined whether this could entail a risk to the wearer's health.

Conclusion

We currently only have some early results from the first phase of the study, showing the presence of nanoparticles in mount masks. In line with our task of identifying possible health risks, we transmitted these results to the Federal Minister of Health. The latter then asked the Supreme Health Council for an opinion ([external link](#)). On this basis, the authorities decided to advise against the use of these masks as a precautionary measure.

However, there are still many unknown elements. The AgMask study of Sciensano is a small scale study on the presence of silver nano particles (and extended to titanium dioxide) in mouth masks and their possible release. This information will be used for further risks evaluation. However many questions will remain unanswered and more research is certainly needed to understand the nature and risks of nanoparticles in mouth masks.