Wood Alcohol (Methanol) Encyclopedia Article

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Wood Alcohol (Methanol)

Wood alcohol, or methanol, is a form of alcohol that is used as an industrial solvent, in antifreeze, and in the manufacture of chemicals. When swallowed, wood alcohol is metabolized or adapted by body enzymes to create formaldehyde and formic acid. Both of these substances are poisonous. Formic acid can cause blindness. Only desperate alcoholics drink wood alcohol, but it is sometimes drunk by accident by people experimenting with various alcohol substitutes. Any consumption of wood alcohol should be treated as a medical emergency, and the 911 emergency line should be called for immediate help.

See Also

Alcohol: Chemistry.