

Patient Safety Alert

Veterans Health Administration Warning System
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Item: Soft Skin™ protective sleeve manufactured by Span America to cover Geo-Matt® seat cushions and mattresses.

Specific Incident: A patient in locked psychiatric ward used a plastic cover on a Geo-Matt® wheelchair cushion to commit suicide. The patient removed the protective sleeve/covering on the cushion and placed it over their head/face resulting in suffocation. The wheelchair seat cushion was purchased with the plastic cover in place for incontinence protection. It is worth restating that plastic trashcan liners, sleeves, wraps, dry cleaning bags, etc., present similar suffocation hazards.

Action: Within 5 business days from the date of this Patient Safety Alert:

1. If this product is present in any areas you consider to be high risk for self-harm, remove the plastic cover.
2. Remove any other plastic covers, sleeves, wraps, liners or bags that are accessible to the patient from areas classified as high risk for self-harm.

Source: VISN 15

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Picture of Soft Skin™ on Geo-Matt® Wheel Chair cushion.

