

THE DANGERS OF EGG DUST

The following is from an article in the JETS Eggspress

It appears many eggers (and not only new eggers) are unaware of the dangers of Egg Dust. A comment regarding these dangers and the attitude of some doctors was raised recently between members of the Creativeside Egg List. The following are some of the responses received.

Remember!
Always use a mask when cutting an egg.
Use some form of eye protection.

"I inquired about egg dust to 3 or 4 different Drs (not that I trust any of them anymore). After all, it is the "practice" of medicine. The PRACTICE! All of these doctors all agreed that EGG DUST is not harmful to the "NORMAL" set of lungs, as it is made up of calcium and calcium is not harmful to our bodies.

In fact, most of us women take supplements. SO aside from those asthmatics and people with upper respiratory infections THEY" (the docs) say egg dust is okay. SO I AM CONFUSED!

I PERSONALLY have always listened to the group where egg dust is concerned and I am NO WAY challenging what the eggers say I am only EXTREMELY INQUISITIVE AS TO WHERE THE "EGG DUST IS HARMFUL" INFO CAME FROM???? Is it actually documented somewhere, or did it originate from someone with ill health?

IF IT IS HARMFUL I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE DOCUMENTATION.AND MARCH IT TO MY DOCTOR RIGHT NOW!!!!"

"The dust is so fine that when exposed to ones airways it goes deep into the lung tissue. Calcium, the main element of an eggshell, will bind with many things because of its unstable nature. I don't think I will bore you with a chemistry lesson but it can cause irreversible damage to the lungs. It can get into the very tiny air sacks deep within the lung tissue called alveoli where gases, such as oxygen and carbon dioxide are exchanged. This, of course, is essential for breathing and calcium can impede this very essential process.

All chemical agents, such as spray paints, nail polish etc, warn of breathing its vapours."
Hope I resolved some of the question.
Noreen Irish

"Thanks for all the info on the egg dust. I had no idea it was harmful, never even really thought about it so I am really glad someone brought it up. I am a newbie and just starting to carve eggs. Is there a way to make this dustbox? How? I assume just a mask is not enough? Also, I assume safety glasses should be worn. Thanks for any help".

"I have no documents stating why egg dust is bad all I know is from personal experience. When first starting out I never used a mask or anything. My allergies got worse. Also the egg dust gets into everything. It doesn't take long for it to filter into everything in the house. It is a pain to clean. I am sure that someone may come up with a document. Also I talked to my doctor a long time ago. She also was not aware of the hazards of the dust but did agree with me that I should do something to protect myself and keep the dust confined." Elizabeth Sachs

"I can't get over the fact that some people are not using any air filtration or at the very least, masks when cutting eggs. Although I am new, I did not think about egg dust. When I first cut an egg I found the odor to be very overwhelming, so I did take some precautions. I am also a respiratory therapist and now work as a perfusionist. A perfusionist is one who operates a heart-lung machine during open heart surgery.

Well, I can say, that if something is not natural for the human body, chances are that it is not good for it as well. Nobody inhales talc powder, but I have heard that some people use crushed egg shell for powder. If anyone has had a chance to look at the human chest, as I have, you would be amazed at the condition of some, if not most, lungs. With all the pollution and years of inhaling dust etc the lungs turn

dark with black deposits throughout.

My point being, why not take extra care & precautions. It certainly does not hurt and it will do nothing but help. Remember, you may not feel the effects now, except for some discomfort, nausea, vomiting as I have heard, but what will this lead to when we get older and our health is compromised? Diseases like emphysema may be the end result if we do not care for ourselves now. It is good to hear that we use and educate others about the hazards of egg dust.

Remember, doctors benefit from the misfortune of others. So when they say it is not bad, they may not know, or else don't care to know!

*I hope this helped
Happy egging
Ted.*

"Hello Everyone, When we started doing eggs my teachers stressed several guidelines to us when working with eggshells. Since most of my teachers had been doing eggs for 20 plus years, we took their advice.

- Always wear safety glasses and a protective mask while cutting shells.
- Make a cutting box with an exhaust fan.
- If you do cutting outside, wear safety glass and mask. Check the direction of wind so the dust is blown away from you.
- Consider covering hair and wear an outer piece of clothing with long sleeves.
- Wash excess dust off cut shell before taking it to a clean work area.
- Always wash skin exposed to dust with soap and water. Take a shower if necessary.
- Never drink or eat anything in the cutting area.
- When working with certain spray sealers, paint, etc. and some glues and sealers wear protective mask designed for these products. Some products warn of inhaling vapors.

Now we have all heard on the news or somewhere about being careful with preparing chicken or other fowl, well the eggshell is the beginning of a chicken. (We could debate that too who came first?) Just take the necessary steps and you will be able to enjoy doing your eggshells as much as you enjoy eating the chicken, turkey etc."

Safety First Rick & Linda James

*"Rather than asking for documentation on why egg dust is harmful, it may be more helpful to ask why chalk dust is. When teachers used to write on chalkboards, they had one of the highest incidences of lung problems. Chalk dust and egg dusts are, after all, calcium, as noted. Our lungs are filled with oxygen and carbon dioxide. When the calcium reacts with the oxygen in our lungs (if it gets there past inhalation and getting stuck in our nasal passages), it stays inside our lungs and doesn't pass out like food does. Years of egging may well lead to what is essentially a clogged-up pair of lungs that cannot work at their full capacity. Nah, I haven't documentation - my biology texts are back in Singapore - but if you ask about the hazards of *chalk dust* I'm pretty sure you will find what you need. "*

Michelle Lee

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