

B. Braun Medical Inc.

The medical device company leads the way for hospitals to go PVC and DEHP free

B. BRAUN MEDICAL INC. remains the only medical device supplier offering a full line of IV solution containers not made with polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and diethylhexyl phthalate (DEHP).

More studies are indicating that PVC bags with DEHP, a plastic softener that can leach from devices, are linked at certain levels to birth defects and other illnesses. The Food and Drug Administration has issued a public health notification about DEHP.

Many companies now have DEHP-free lines but still offer DEHP-containing medical products. B. Braun made the decision a long time ago to go DEHP free. It even sponsors the DEHP-Free Award for Practice Greenhealth.

“More than three decades ago, B. Braun recognized the environmental and patient risks posed by products containing DEHP and PVC,” says Rick Williamson, vice president of Pharmaceutical Marketing at B. Braun. “We were the first medical device manufacturer to remove these harmful substances from many products. This is a testament to B. Braun’s ecological awareness and patient-centric philosophy.”

Ted Schettler, science director of the Science and Environmental Health Network and adviser to the Health Care Without Harm campaign, says the number of hospitals that have gone DEHP free are in the minority, though he says

there have been “great strides” in moving away from it in recent years.

“People can come down on all sides and have arguments about DEHP,” Schettler says, “but B. Braun is an example of a company that has developed an alternative that avoids DEHP exposure. That’s good. We want more of that.”

Schettler says it’s become easier to switch to non-PVC as more DEHP-free products have become available. “Hospitals that have been the most successful replacing them go about it in a very systematic way,” he says. “They identify the problem, they get the clinical staff involved early on and they get samples of the alternatives so they don’t spring things on people.”

B. Braun has more than 50,000 employees in more than 60 countries and is the 13th-largest medical device manufacturer in the world. It has four manufacturing facilities in the U.S., with more than 5,500 employees.

In addition to going DEHP free, B. Braun is a leader in developing infusion therapy and pain management products and services. The company’s innovations enable:

- Improved patient outcomes. B. Braun’s physician-preferred pain control products have reduced patient complications.
- Medication error reduction. These errors account for an estimated 7,000 deaths annually. B. Braun’s DoseTrac® with Infusion

NEW BUSINESS MEMBERS

Knauf Insulation, Shelbyville, Ind.

View Inc., Milpitas, Calif.

BCA, Elkhart, Ind.

UL Environment, Marietta, Ga.

Gotham 360 LLC, New York

Heapy Engineering, Dayton, Ohio



Photos courtesy of B. Braun Medical Inc.

B. Braun went to non-PVC and DEHP-free IV solution containers more than three decades ago.



One consultant says B. Braun is “showing great responsibility through their product innovation.”

Pumps and DUPLEX® Drug delivery are designed to ensure that patients get the correct medication in the correct dosage from the correct clinician.

- Infection prevention. B. Braun products are designed to help reduce serious catheter-related bloodstream infections. The company developed the industry’s leading passive catheter as well as a silver-impregnated antibacterial connector, which is designed to help reduce bacterial growth on the surface and in the fluid path of the device.
- Environmental responsibility. B. Braun uses processes and machinery that conserve energy and natural resources.

Also:

- In January, B. Braun received FDA approval for the next generation 1L Intravenous Containers E³. It represents the latest advancement in IV container technology in more than 25 years and is a first-of-its-kind offering that will provide health care professionals with high-quality, easy-to-use IV containers that are not made with natural rubber latex, DEHP or PVC.
- In April, B. Braun expanded its TITAN™XL line of large-volume containers, which are the only large-volume, flexible containers on the market not made with DEHP or PVC.
- In August, B. Braun announced it had received FDA approval of Nutrilipid® 20% (I.V. fat emulsion) for parenteral nutrition therapy in adult and pediatric patients. It will be available in flexible containers not made with DEHP or PVC.

“B. Braun products help pave the way for successful recycling programs within hospitals,” says Linda Smith-Zengen of JT Environmental Consulting Inc. “With PVC and DEHP already removed, patients are safer and there’s also the waste savings being generated. If hospitals don’t have a recycling program, they could spend on average \$1.5 million a year or more on disposal. That money can be spent elsewhere. B. Braun wants to help. They are showing great responsibility through their product innovation.” —RK

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—TED SCHESSLER, SCIENCE DIRECTOR OF THE SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NETWORK AND ADVISER TO HEALTH CARE WITHOUT HARM

RENEWING BUSINESS MEMBERS

- Action Bag Co.**, Bensenville, Ill.
- The BioPure Group**, Lone Tree, Colo.
- Colorado Medical Waste Inc.**, Aurora, Colo.
- Construction Specialties Inc.**, Muncy, Pa.
- Covidien**, Mansfield, Mass.
- HDR Architecture Inc.**, Omaha, Neb.
- Johnson & Johnson**, New Brunswick, N.J.
- Lac-Mac Limited**, London, Ontario
- LDI Corp.**, Portsmouth, N.H.
- Omniceil**, Mountain View, Calif.
- Velmed Inc.**, Gibsonia, Pa.
- WHR Architects**, Houston
- Xenex Healthcare Services**, San Antonio