Glaxo Plans to Remove Zinc From Poligrip Denture Adhesive

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GlaxoSmithKline said on Thursday that it would stop making and distributing three versions of its popular denture adhesive Poligrip until it removed zinc from the products because of concerns about health risks.

Malesia Dunn, director of communications for GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare, said the action affected three Poligrip products: Super Poligrip Original, Ultra Fresh and Extra Care.

The company said it planned to reformulate the product without zinc.

Those products are used by an estimated 3.5 million households in the United States, she said.

In a consumer advisory on its Web site, the company said it had “become aware of potential health problems associated with the long-term excessive use of our zinc-containing denture adhesive products.”

The company added that the products were safe to use as directed, but that some consumers used excessive amounts.

The company, based in London, is being sued by people who say they suffered nerve and blood injuries from high levels of zinc intake from the products.

The company says 49 million Americans use dentures, or 22 percent of the adult population, and 29 percent of them use adhesives. Ms. Dunn said the Food and Drug Administration had been advised of the action and did not require removal of current products from the shelves.

The F.D.A. had no comment on the matter on Thursday.

In a statement, Glaxo said excessive use of the product over several years “may lead to the development of neurological symptoms and blood problems such as anemia. Neurological symptoms may include numbness, tingling or weakness in the arms and legs, and difficulties with walking and balance.”

The company has another Poligrip product marked “Free,” which contains no zinc.