

ON THE COVER SALOL

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An early antiseptic, phenyl salicylate, or salol, was discovered in 1886 by heating salicylic acid with phenol. Once used in sunscreens, phenyl salicylate is now used in the manufacture of some polymers, lacquers, adhesives, waxes and polishes. Schools use it to demonstrate how cooling rates affect crystal size in igneous rocks. It also has a useful antibacterial activity within the small intestine and is a mild painkiller.