

# Methylethyl ketone

## General:

Methyl ethyl ketone or MEK, also known as 2-butanone, is an organic compound with the formula  $\text{CH}_3\text{C}(\text{O})\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3$ . This colorless liquid ketone has a sharp, sweet odor reminiscent of butterscotch and acetone. It is produced industrially on a large scale, and also occurs in trace amounts in nature. MEK dissolves many substances and is used as a solvent in processes involving gums, resins, cellulose acetate and nitrocellulose coatings and in vinyl films. For this reason it finds use in the manufacture of plastics, textiles, in the production of paraffin wax, and in household products such as lacquer, varnishes, paint remover, a denaturing agent for denatured alcohol, glues, and as a cleaning agent. MEK is also used in dry erase markers as the solvent of the erasable dye.

MEK is biosynthesized by some trees and found in some fruits and vegetables in small amounts. It is also released to the air from car and truck exhausts.

Acute (short-term) inhalation exposure to methyl ethyl ketone in humans results in irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat. Other effects reported from acute inhalation exposure include central nervous system depression, headache, and nausea. Dermatitis has been reported following dermal exposure. Limited information is available on the chronic (long-term) effects of methyl ethyl ketone in humans.

## Indication:

check of exposure level

The following tests are available:

- **Methyl ethyl ketone in whole blood**

Material: 5 ml whole blood

TAT: 2 weeks\*

Method: GC

Units: mg/l

Ref.- range: <0.1



- **Methyl ethyl ketone in urine**

Material: 10 ml urine

TAT: 2 weeks\*

Method: GC

Units: mg/l

Ref.- range: see report

For complete list of laboratory test offered at Freiburg Medical Laboratory, please visit  
<http://www.fml-dubai.com/parameter-listings/>