



Cosmetic Products – Ingredient Labelling

Help Note for Dermatologists

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The Cosmetic, Toiletry and Perfumery Association

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Cosmetic Ingredient Labelling

The legislation that regulates cosmetic products in the UK, and across Europe, is the EU Cosmetics Regulation (1223/2009).

Under the legislation all cosmetic products sold in the EU must display a complete ingredients list. This helps users to identify products with ingredients to which they know they are sensitive. Ingredient names must, by law, comply with European requirements and use the International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients, known as INCI. This means that in whatever European country a cosmetic product is bought, the ingredient names will be the same. These INCI names have also been adopted by many countries worldwide.

Listed in Table 1 are some examples of INCI names of ingredients more associated with sensitisation.

Approved INCI names for the EU market are listed in EU Inventory of Cosmetic Ingredients which is published in the European Commission's Official Journal (No L132). The Inventory was last updated in February 2006.

CTPA has provided the British Association of Dermatologists (www.bad.org.uk, tel: 0207 383 0266) with a copy of the 2006 updated version of the Inventory of Cosmetic Ingredients. BAD can advise its members of the INCI name of any ingredient for which the chemical name is known. Trade names are not included in the Inventory.

This leaflet has been produced for members of the British Association of Dermatologists by the Cosmetic Toiletry & Perfumery Association (CTPA), Josaron House, 5-7 John Princes Street, London, W1G 0JN.

CTPA is the UK trade association for the cosmetic, toiletry and perfumery industry in the UK. Our members vary from small and medium-sized companies to large multi-nationals and include manufacturers, raw material suppliers and service providers. Our primary goal is to promote good working practice to ensure that consumers are provided with the very best products.

Table 1

INCI name	Chemical name or common name	Trade name(s) examples
Formaldehyde	formaldehyde	
2-Bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol DMDM hydantoin Imidazolidinyl urea Diazolidinyl urea Quaternium-15 Methylisothiazolinone	formaldehyde releasers MI or MIT	Bronopol Germall 115 Germall II Dowicil 200
Methylchloroisothiazolinone and methylisothiazolinone blend		Kathon CG Euxyl K100
Lanolin (and derivatives)	lanolin / wool alcohols	Amerchol L101
Methylparaben Propylparaben	parabens methyl 4-hydroxybenzoate propyl 4-hydroxybenzoate	
Parfum	perfume, fragrance	
Colophonium	colophony, rosin	
Tosylamide/formaldehyde resin	toluene sulfonamide formaldehyde resin	Santolite Resin
p-Phenylenediamine	PPD	
p-Toluenediamine	PTD	
BHT	butylated hydroxytoluene	
Benzophenone-3	oxybenzone	Eusolex 4360
Butyl methoxydibenzoylmethane		Eusolex 9020 Parsol 1789
Octyl dimethyl PABA		Eusolex 6007
Ethylhexyl methoxycinnamate		Eusolex 2292 Parsol MCX
Resorcinol		Jarocol RL Rodol RS

Hair Colorants

Hair colorants are extremely popular products. Fifty million units of home hair colorants are sold and forty-five million salon applications of hair colorants are carried out in the UK each year. While adverse reactions to hair dyes are exceedingly rare, it is the case that certain consumers do experience reactions. When these occur, in some instances they can be severe and obviously very uncomfortable and distressing. Fortunately their effects are usually short-term. It is therefore important that hair colorants are used safely and correctly to avoid an adverse reaction.

Important safety instructions are provided on the outer pack and on instruction leaflets contained inside hair colorant products. These emphasise the importance of following the instructions closely. They highlight that some individuals may experience an allergic reaction and this reaction may be severe. It is recommended that an allergy alert test be performed at least 48 hours before colouring the hair. Clear instructions for the allergy alert test are provided.

There may also be other warnings on the packaging relating to the safe use of the product. Industry has labelled products with this information voluntarily for many years, and the need to label certain hair colorants with information about allergy and safe use has now become a legal requirement.

The allergy alert test is in no way intended to diagnose allergy in the way a skin patch test from a dermatologist would. The allergy alert test is just an indicator to the consumer that if they react to the product on a small area of skin, they should not go on to colour their hair. To do so could result in a severe reaction. If an individual reacts to the allergy alert test, they are advised to contact the manufacturer (careline or helpline numbers are provided on the pack) who will help them and their doctor organise diagnostic patch-testing with a dermatologist in order to identify which ingredient led to the reaction. Consumers are informed that any product containing that ingredient should not be used in the future, even from another manufacturer.

Individuals who suffer a reaction following the use of a hair colorant are advised to seek medical attention first but to also contact the manufacturer of the product or the salon where they had their hair coloured, both of whom will help the individual and their doctor handle the reaction.

Because of the possibility of cross-sensitisation for people who react to the hair dye para-phenylenediamine (PPD), all the products with dyes in this family will be labelled “contains phenylenediamines” or “contains phenylenediamines (toluenediamines)”.

Temporary “Black Henna” Tattoos

It has been widely documented that so-called “black henna” tattoos can cause painful short and long-term damage to the skin. “Black henna” tattoos are not henna at all, but are often mixed with the substance para-phenylenediamine (PPD). Whilst PPD is used safely as an ingredient in hair colorants, it is banned for this kind of direct use on skin under the Cosmetics Regulation. CTPA is aware PPD applied directly to the skin at the high concentration needed in such tattoos can trigger adverse skin reactions and contact dermatitis.

Exposure to PPD in “black henna” tattoos can also increase future susceptibility to reactions when using other safe products which contain PPD, such as a hair colorant. Although the European Commission’s independent scientific committee has recommended that PPD should not be used in temporary tattoos, some illegal uses still continue, especially at festivals and holiday resorts. CTPA and BAD have issued joint guidance advising holiday-makers to avoid these.

Fragrance Allergens

All cosmetics that contain any fragrances will have the word 'parfum' in the ingredients list.

Fragrance ingredients are tested to assess how likely they are to cause skin reactions. There are 26 fragrance ingredients, listed in Table 2, that are considered more likely to cause reactions in susceptible people. These must be indicated in the list of ingredients, in addition to the word 'parfum', if their concentration exceeds 0.001% in leave-on products (e.g. a moisturiser) and 0.01% in rinse-off products (e.g. a shampoo).

This way of labelling cosmetics was introduced in 2005 to help people to make informed choices about what they buy, particularly if they have a diagnosed allergy to a specific fragrance ingredient. Such labelling will also aid dermatologists trying to identify the cause of a patient's reaction.

Methylisothiazolinone, also known as MI or MIT

Methylisothiazolinone is a preservative used in some cosmetic products and other household products. Preservatives are important ingredients designed to protect products, and so the consumer, against contamination by microorganisms during storage and continued use.

Dermatologists have reported an increase in cases of allergy in their clinics to MI. Following discussions with dermatologists, the European cosmetics industry has assessed the available information regarding the risk of allergic reactions to MI and recommends that this ingredient should no longer be used in leave-on skin care cosmetic products.

Formulations will take some time to change and people who know they are allergic to MI should avoid any cosmetic containing this ingredient, whether leave-on or rinse-off. This can be done by checking the ingredients list which every cosmetic product must have either on its carton, pack or label, card etc at point of sale. The name will always be listed as methylisothiazolinone.

If you suspect that you have had a reaction to a cosmetic product containing MI, it is best to contact your doctor or medical specialist so that you can be referred for patch testing by a dermatologist. Do though also contact the manufacturer (contact details, often including customer care departments, are provided on-pack) so the problem can be investigated. This feedback provides the industry with invaluable information.

Table 2

INCI name	Other names
Amyl cinnamal	
Benzyl alcohol	
Cinnamyl alcohol	
Citral	
Eugenol	
Hydroxycitronellal	hydroxy-citronellal
Isoeugenol	
Amylcinnamyl alcohol	amylcin-namyl alcohol
Benzyl salicylate	
Cinnamal	
Coumarin	
Geraniol	
Hydroxyisohexyl 3-cyclohexene carboxaldehyde	hydroxy-methylpentylcyclohexenecarboxaldehyde
Anise alcohol	anisyl alcohol
Benzyl cinnamate	
Farnesol	
Butylphenyl methylpropional	2-(4-tert-butylbenzyl) propionaldehyde
Linalool	
Benzyl benzoate	
Citronellol	
Hexyl cinnamal	hexyl cinnam-aldehyde
Limonene	d-limonene
Methyl 2-octynoate	methyl heptin carbonate
alpha-Isomethyl ionone	3-methyl-4-(2,6,6-tri-methyl-2-cyclohexen-1-yl)-3-buten-2-one
Evernia prunastri	oak moss extract
Evernia furfuracea	treemoss extract

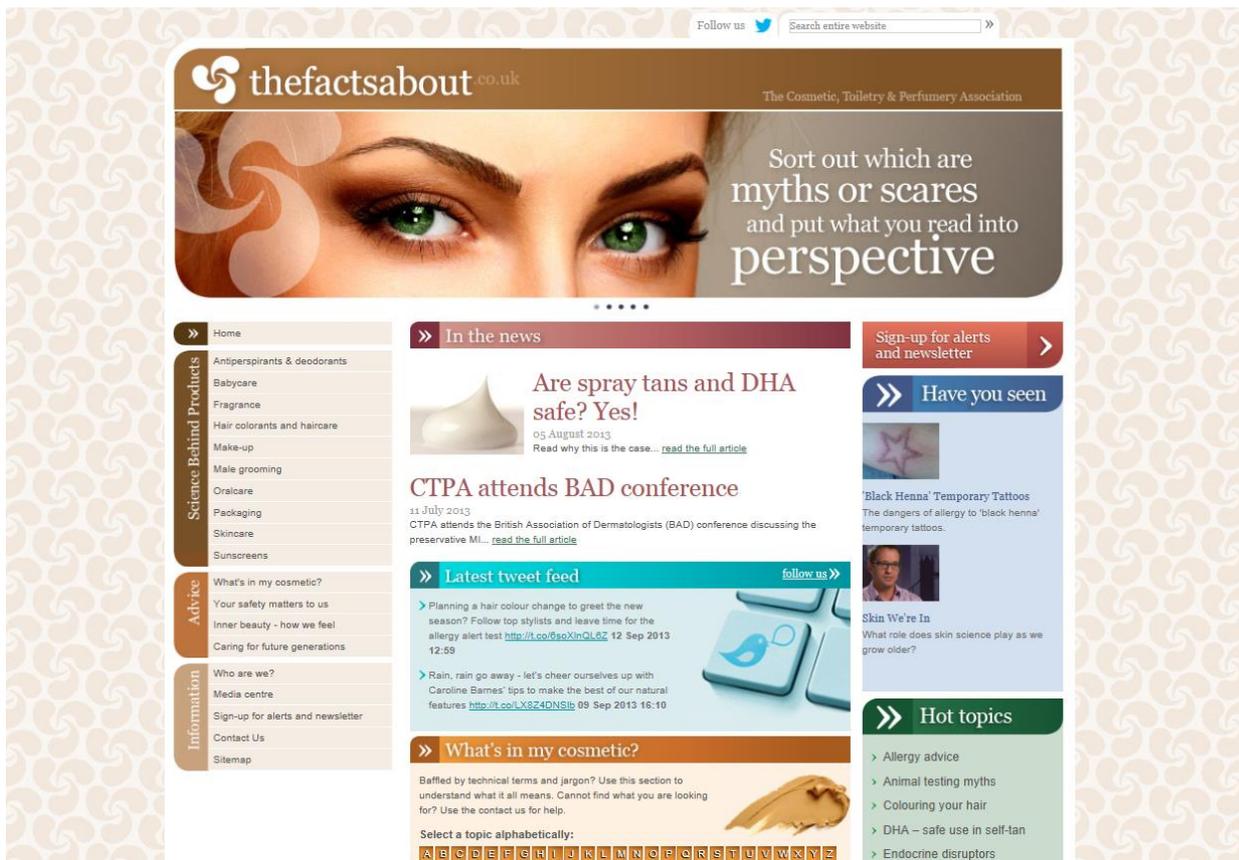
Nut Allergies

Consumers with a known allergy to certain nuts may wish to avoid products that contain nut derived ingredients. Table 3 gives a list of common nuts and the INCI names by which they will be declared on the labels of cosmetic products.

Table 3

Ingredient	INCI name
Almond	Prunus amygdalus
Sweet almond	Prunus dulcis
Bitter almond	Prunus amara
Brazil nut	Bertholletia excelsa
Cashew nut	Anacardium occidentale
Chestnut	Castanea sativa
Coconut *	Cocos nucifera
Hazelnut	Corylus avellana Corylus americana Corylus rostrata
Horse chestnut	Aesculus hippocastanum
Kola nut	Cola vera
Kukui nut	Aleurites muluccana
Macadamia nut	Macadamia ternifolia Macadamia integrifolia
Peanut	Arachis hypogaea
Pistachio nut	Pistacia vera Pistacia lentiscus
Walnut	Juglans regia Juglans mandshurica Juglans nigra
Sesame seed	Sesamum indicum

* Coconut in food does not seem to be associated with severe nut allergy reactions.



The CTPA's consumer website www.thefactsabout.co.uk aims to provide factual advice, best tips (for example applying sunscreen and using hair colorants, including a section called 'Colour with Confidence') and information on the science behind the products you use and enjoy daily. There are also sections on allergy and ingredient labelling. Other areas of interest are a section on chemicals which houses commentary from external sources such as the Royal Society of Chemistry and a baby care section with a useful parents' guide to cosmetics.

For more information, contact Dr Emma Meredith (emeredith@ctpa.org.uk).



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