

International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients (INCI)

By law, all cosmetic products sold in the UK must display a complete ingredients list. Ingredient labelling helps people to identify products with ingredients to which they know they are allergic. Ingredient names must, by law, use the International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients, known as INCI. This means that whether you buy your cosmetics in the UK or Europe, the ingredient names will be the same. These INCI names have also been adopted by many countries worldwide.

If you have been diagnosed with an allergy to a substance, you may have been given the substance's chemical name or common name by a dermatologist/healthcare professional. The tables below provide the corresponding INCI name for cosmetic ingredients which are more frequently associated with allergies or sensitisation.

Artificial Nails and Nail Cosmetics

INCI name	Chemical name or common name	Trade name(s) examples
	Acrylate / acrylic monomers	
	Urethane acrylates	
1,4-Butanediol dimethacrylate	1,4 BDMA	
Di-HEMA trimethylhexyl dicarbamate	Urethane dimethacrylate UDMA	
Ethyl cyanoacrylate	ECA 2-Cyanoacrylic acid ethyl ester	
Ethyl methacrylate	EMA	
Glycol dimethacrylate	Ethyleneglycol dimethacrylate (EGDMA) Glycol HEMA-methacrylate	
HEMA	2-Hydroxyethyl methacrylate	
2-Hydroxyethyl acrylate	Ethylene glycol acrylate HEA	
Hydroxypropyl methacrylate	HPMA Propylene glycol monomethacrylate	
Methyl methacrylate		
Methacrylic acid		
Tetrahydrofurfuryl methacrylate		
Tosylamide/formaldehyde resin	Toluene sulfonamide/formaldehyde resin	Santolite Resin

Note: Acrylic copolymers are rarely known to be associated with sensitisation and do not cross-react with other acrylates.

Hair Colorants

INCI name	Chemical name or common name	Trade name(s) examples
p-Phenylenediamine	Para-phenylenediamine PPD	
Toluene-2,5-diamine	p-Toluenediamine PTD	
Resorcinol		Jarocol RL Rodol RS

Preservatives

INCI name	Chemical name or common name	Trade name(s) examples
2-Bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol		Bronopol
Diazolidinyl urea	Formaldehyde releaser	Germall II
DMDM hydantoin	Formaldehyde releaser	
Formaldehyde	Formaldehyde	
Imidazolidinyl urea	Formaldehyde releaser	Germall 115
Methylisothiazolinone	2-Methyl-4-isothiazolin-3-one MI or MIT	
Methylchloroisothiazolinone and methylisothiazolinone blend	5-Chloro-2-Methyl-4-Isothiazolin-3-one / 2-Methyl-4-isothiazolin-3-one C(M)IT/MIT	Kathon CG Euxyl K100

UV Filters

INCI name	Chemical name or common name	Trade name(s) examples
Benzophenone-3	Oxybenzone	Eusolex 4360 Escalol 567 Uvinul M 40
Butyl methoxydibenzoylmethane	Avobenzone	Eusolex 9020 Parsol 1789
Ethylhexyl dimethyl PABA	Octyl dimethyl PABA Padimate O	Eusolex 6007 Escalol 507 Uvasorb DMO
Ethylhexyl methoxycinnamate	Octinoxate Octyl methoxycinnamate	Eusolex 2292 Parsol MCX

Other

INCI name	Chemical name or common name	Trade name(s) examples
BHT	Butylated hydroxytoluene	
Colophonium	Colophony, rosin	
Lanolin (and derivatives)	Lanolin / wool alcohols	Amerchol L101

Perfume / Fragrance (Parfum)

INCI name	Other names / Trade names
Amyl cinnamal	
Benzyl alcohol	
Cinnamyl alcohol	
Citral	
Eugenol	
Hydroxycitronellal	Hydroxy-citronellal
Isoeugenol	
Amylcinnamyl alcohol	Amyl-cinnamyl alcohol
Benzyl salicylate	
Cinnamal	
Coumarin	
Geraniol	
Hydroxyisohexyl 3-cyclohexene carboxaldehyde	Hydroxymethylpentylcyclohexenecarboxaldehyde Lylal
Anise alcohol	Anisyl alcohol
Benzyl cinnamate	
Farnesol	
Butylphenyl methylpropional	2-(4-Tert-butylbenzyl) propionaldehyde Lilial
Linalool	
Benzyl benzoate	
Citronellol	
Hexyl cinnamal	Hexyl cinnamaldehyde
Limonene	d-Limonene
Methyl 2-octynoate	Methyl heptin carbonate (MHC)
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.

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.

Tables and ingredients prepared in conjunction with dermatologists from the British Society for Cutaneous Allergy (BSCA).