



CTPA Confidence in Cosmetics

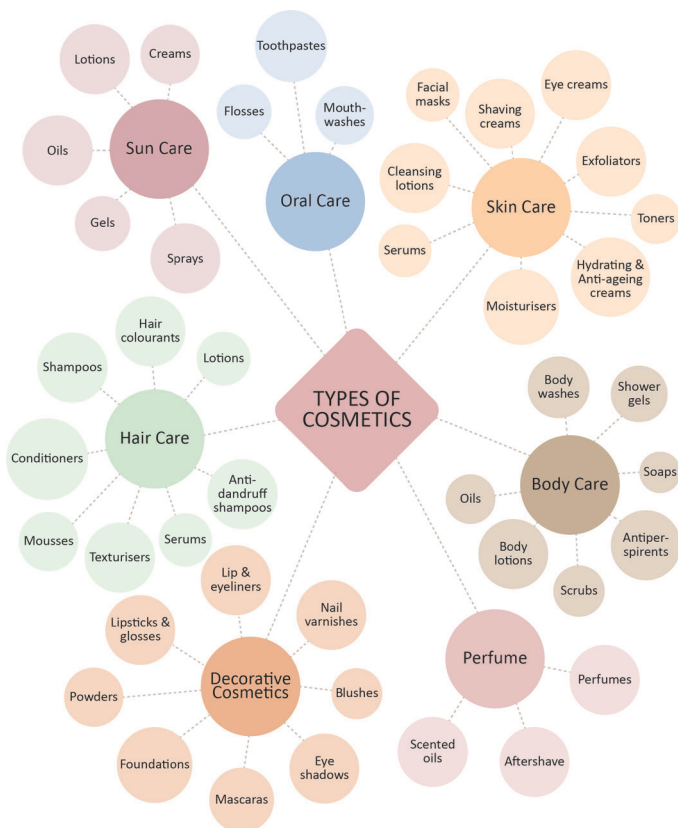
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The Cosmetic, Toiletry and Perfumery Association (CTPA) is the voice of the cosmetic and personal care industry in the UK and its primary goal is to promote good working practice to ensure that consumers are provided with the very best products.

The CTPA’s consumer website www.thefactsabout.co.uk aims to provide factual advice about the safety of cosmetic and personal care products and the strict laws that govern their manufacture, sale or supply. Also on the site are best tips (such as using hair colorants and applying sunscreen) and information on the science behind the products we use and enjoy daily, both personally and in a professional setting. There are also sections on allergy and ingredient labelling, plus a helpful section called “What’s in my cosmetic?”.

The Cosmetic, Toiletry and Perfumery Association
Sackville House
40 Piccadilly
London W1J 0DR
tel: +44 (0) 20 7491 8891

info@ctpa.org.uk
www.ctpa.org.uk / www.thefactsabout.co.uk



Confidence in Cosmetics



Cosmetics are safe for everyone to use

All cosmetic products supplied throughout the UK must be safe. The safety laws controlling cosmetic products are extremely stringent. In the UK, the manufacture and supply of cosmetics is governed by the Product Safety and Metrology Regulations (Schedule 34) 2020, otherwise known as the UK Cosmetics Regulation. Compliance is mandatory and the UK Cosmetics Regulation is a gold standard for safety.

Are some ingredients safer than others?

No. All ingredients must be safe to use, as must be the final cosmetic product.

Should I look for products that are 'free-from' certain ingredients?

Not from a safety perspective. Safety is regularly reviewed by independent scientists. If an ingredient were found to cause cancer or be unsafe as it is used in a cosmetic product it would be banned from use. In rare cases where someone needs to avoid a specific substance to which they are allergic, the ingredient list can be used to check whether a product contains the ingredient.



Are natural ingredients safer than man-made ingredients?

As far as human safety is concerned, it makes no difference whether a chemical is natural, organic or man-made (synthetic), the body really cannot tell the source of an ingredient. All cosmetic ingredients must be safe.

What if I have a reaction or I am allergic to one of the ingredients?

All manufacturers are required to ensure their products are safe for use but no matter how careful they are, it is always true that someone might react to a particular product. The body does not differentiate between something that is natural or synthetic; almost any substance has the potential to irritate or produce an allergic reaction in someone, somewhere. Whilst some substances can be more likely to cause a reaction than others, each individual is different and not all individuals will react to something that causes reactions in others.

All cosmetic products available in the UK and the EU must display a complete list of ingredients to help users identify products that contain ingredients to which they may be sensitive. For example, within essential oils or perfume, there may be certain ingredients that are considered more likely to cause reactions in susceptible people. If they are present above a certain level in any product, then they will be declared separately in the list.

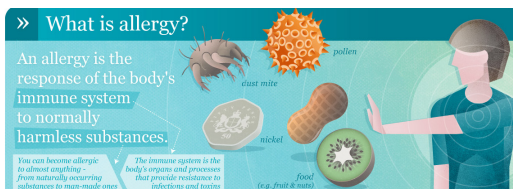
If you have a reaction to a cosmetic product, it's really important that you contact the manufacturer to let them know. Their contact details will be on the packaging.

INGREDIENTS

Aqua, Mica, Polybutene, Triisostearin, Prunus Persica Flower Extract, Betula Alba Oil, Lavandula Officinalis Oil, Paraffinum Liquidum, Propylene Carbonate, Methylparaben, Phenoxyethanol, Propylparaben, Lecithin, Alcohol Denat., BHT, Parfum, Aroma, Cinnamyl Alcohol, Citronellol, [+/-CI 15580, CI 45430]

Read about allergy on

www.thefactsabout.co.uk/allergy



What about the final products?

Cosmetic products are safe. The formulation of cosmetic products is carried out by highly qualified scientists from many different specialist fields. Safety is built in to every stage of development. To put just one new product on the shelves can take several years, with many teams of scientists working on it. Then, before it is placed on the market, each product must be subject to a rigorous safety assessment performed by a qualified professional. The safety assessor will look at each ingredient, how the product will be used, by whom, how often and where on the body it will be used, before personally signing the assessment to enable the product to be supplied to the public.

Can chemicals build-up in our bodies?

Our bodies act like mini chemical factories. Chemicals are the building blocks of life and our kidneys, liver and spleen work efficiently to rid the body of waste and chemicals that are not required after our body has taken nutrients from our food to keep us functioning healthily. The skin is an effective barrier against penetration but our bodies can absorb substances from our environment, through contact, eating, drinking or breathing. In some cases, substances remain in the body in trace amounts. However, just because something can be detected (today's technology allows us to measure extraordinarily low levels) doesn't mean it is going to cause us any harm and it may well be on its way 'out' of the body!



All cosmetic ingredients and cosmetic products are regulated and safe. It is important to remember that you should always buy cosmetic products from a trustworthy source such as reputable retail outlets or an official website.

For more information on specific ingredients:

Aluminium

Aluminium is the third most naturally abundant element in the environment, found in food, water and pharmaceuticals as well as a wide range of consumer products. There is no conclusive evidence to suggest that aluminium presents a health threat when included in cosmetic products such as antiperspirants. On the contrary, there is strong evidence to show that antiperspirants are safe and effective everyday products.

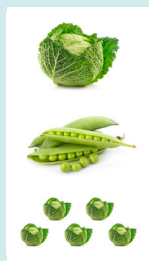


Antiperspirants

Antiperspirants contain ingredients called aluminium salts that dissolve in sweat and leave a thin coating of gel over the sweat glands. This coating reduces the amount of sweat on the skin for a number of hours after the antiperspirant is applied. Alum, a salt of aluminium, is the crystal widely used in “natural” deodorants/antiperspirants and works along similar lines. Note that alum contains aluminium. The use of both must be safe in cosmetic products.

Aluminium salts form an insoluble gel which sits on the surface of the skin and creates a small, temporary ‘plug’ which reduces the amount of sweat released onto the skin’s surface. There is a strong body of scientific research that indicates very little aluminium crosses the skin from the application of antiperspirants. This small amount would be a minor source of exposure to aluminium compared with all the other sources (such as food and drink), and well within safe levels established by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Endocrine ‘disruptors’

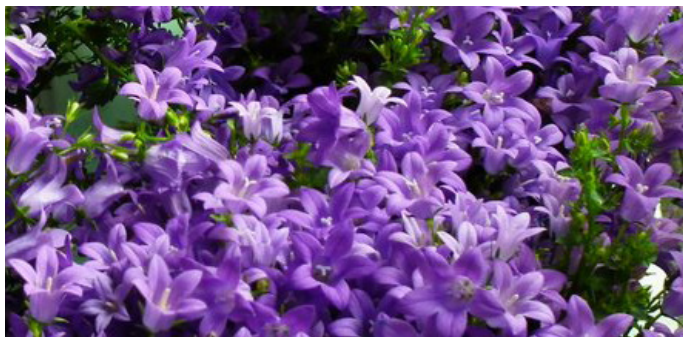


Certain ingredients used in cosmetic products have been claimed to be ‘endocrine disruptors’ because they have the potential to mimic a hormone such as oestrogen. Endocrine mimics include phytoestrogens – oestrogen-like compounds found in plants. We eat these in perfect safety in foods such as cabbage, soya beans, soy products and Brussels sprouts yet the exposure to oestrogen mimics in foods is many millions of times greater than that from cosmetics. No adverse health effects have been associated with these dietary exposures and therefore it is inconceivable that the vanishingly weak levels found in cosmetics could possibly have any adverse effect.

Just because something has the potential to mimic a hormone does not mean it will disrupt our endocrine system. Many substances, including natural ones, mimic hormones but very few, and these are mostly potent medicines, have ever been shown to cause disruption of the endocrine system. Both natural and synthetic oestrogens are prohibited from being present in cosmetic products, so any cosmetic product containing oestrogens would be illegal in the UK.

Fragrance

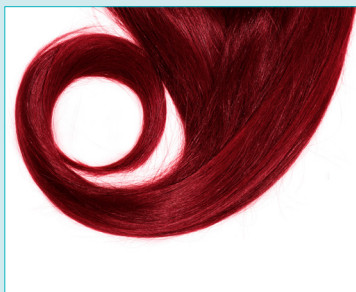
Some people may look for fragrance-free cosmetic products for a number of reasons. However, unscented or unperfumed products may well contain a small amount of fragrance to cover-up, or mask, the natural smell of the ingredients in the product.



If you want to avoid fragrance altogether, it is extremely important that you look at the ingredient list which must be on the outer packaging or close by at the point of sale. Any added fragrance is always identified by the word '**parfum**' in the ingredients list. You should also avoid any essential oils because, as well as having a strong smell, they often have the same natural constituents that are used in fragrances.

Hair dyes

Hair dyes have been the subject of allegations linking them to cancer. Such stories are distressing and untrue. Hair colorants are one of the most thoroughly studied consumer products on the market. Scientific bodies regularly review scientific studies on hair dyes and no



link has been found between the use of hair colorants and any type of cancer. Hair colorants for consumers and hairdressers have been extensively assessed for safety and are safe to use. **As with any cosmetic product, it is important to always read and follow the instructions for use.**

Lead



In the past, stories have circulated that lipsticks contain lead. The use of lead in cosmetic products is specifically banned in the UK. However, lead is a naturally occurring element that is found everywhere in the environment. We are exposed to lead every day from natural sources like water and earth, for example through drinking water and eating root vegetables. Likewise, it is possible that minute traces are carried into cosmetic products from the environment or during manufacture. These extremely low levels are taken into account as part of the safety assessment to ensure their presence does not pose a risk to human health.

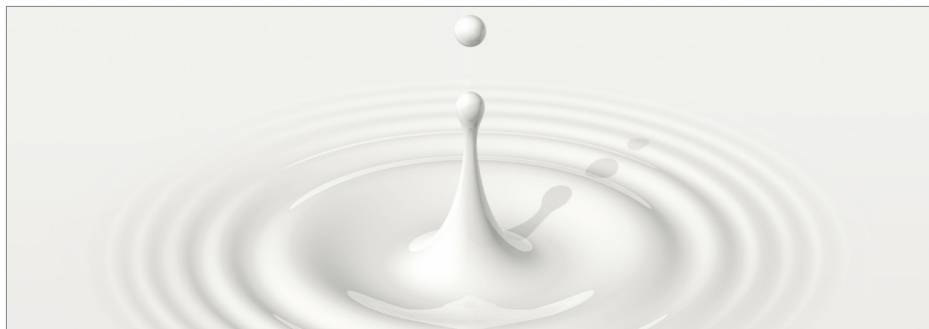
Parabens

The parabens are a family of substances, some of which are used as preservatives in cosmetics. A number of different parabens are also found naturally in many plants, fruits and animals. Only specifically approved preservatives may be used in cosmetics and several of the parabens family have been approved for this use. This is because they are both very safe and very effective. Preservatives are necessary to prevent product deterioration so play an essential role in ensuring the safety and quality of cosmetic products. Parabens are very rarely used in deodorant and antiperspirant products because these products are, essentially, self-preserving.

Stories linking parabens to cancer or other adverse effects are groundless. If there was any truth in those allegations, no parabens would have been officially endorsed as approved safe preservatives in cosmetics.

Phthalates

Phthalates are a family of substances each with its own, unique, spectrum of properties, so whilst some have been banned from cosmetic products, the safety of other specific ingredients is not in dispute. In the same way, fungi as a family include both nutritious mushrooms and poisonous toadstools.



Silicones

Silicones are commonly used in cosmetic products for their excellent conditioning properties for both skin and hair. They have been extensively studied and safely used for decades.

There is a misconception that products containing silicones feel greasy and heavy. Whilst this may have been the case in the past, nowadays there are many different types of silicone ingredients targetted at different skin and hair types. These are able to deliver the benefits whilst minimising any greasy feel.

SLS/Sulfates



Sodium lauryl sulphate (SLS) and sodium laureth sulphate (SLES) are 'surfactants' that have excellent cleansing properties, creating a creamy foam that heightens the product experience. Whilst prolonged or frequently repeated contact with high concentrations may cause irritation, this is not normally seen at the low concentrations used in cosmetics and personal care products, and they are safe to use in cosmetic products. However, during certain medical treatments for cancer, patients are told to avoid soaps and ingredients like SLS to avoid irritating already sensitive skin. There are other ingredients that do a similar job; so if you particularly want to avoid SLS or SLES simply check the ingredient listing which must be shown on the pack or close by to the purchase point.

It is sometimes claimed that sulfates remove the natural oils from the skin and hair. This should not be the case with the way sulfates are used in cosmetic products. Additionally, cosmetic products are formulated to include other ingredients to minimise any such possible effects and to help maintain the good condition of the skin and hair.

Talc

Cosmetic talc has been safely used for over 120 years. Cosmetic talc is prepared by milling talc from mines specifically selected for the high quality and purity of the talc seams. In addition, the mined talc is repeatedly checked for purity before being classified as cosmetic grade. You may have heard that talc is chemically similar to asbestos but this is untrue. Talc and asbestos are quite different in both structure and properties. All cosmetic talc must be free of any asbestos.

You may also have read claims that talc is linked with ovarian cancer. Again this is not the case. No scientific study has ever shown that talc causes ovarian cancer.



Triclosan

Triclosan is an ingredient used in cosmetic products because of its excellent antibacterial qualities. It is proven to help enhance oral hygiene through its use in toothpastes and mouthwashes and personal hygiene through its use in soaps, hand washing liquids and deodorants. Triclosan has been assessed as safe for use in cosmetic products by the European Commission's independent panel of scientific experts.

Safety
Science
Trust

Myths and misinformation

You may have read alarming news items or information online that suggests a link between the use of everyday products, like cosmetics, and ill-health, including cancer.

Through scientific research, we know that our risk of cancer depends on a combination of our genes, our environment and things to do with our lifestyle which we are more able to control, for example smoking, alcohol consumption, weight control and fitness levels. However, those people unfortunate enough to be diagnosed with cancer often seek to better understand the possible causes. Whilst lifestyle choices can make a difference, the use of cosmetics and personal care products is not seen as an identified risk by oncologists and cancer support specialists.

We hope that this booklet helped dispel the myths and misinformation that can circulate and cause alarm and worry for the millions of consumers who use cosmetic products every day and especially for those who are unfortunately suffering with cancer.

Still confused by things you have read?

Further advice about the safe use of cosmetics and personal care products can be found on Cancer Research UK's website where there is a specific section to counter such 'cancer controversies'. Similarly, Breast Cancer Now has useful information on its website.

Sense About Science (SAS) is a charity that challenges the misrepresentation of science and evidence in public life and has set up the 'Ask for Evidence' campaign to counter bogus claims and urban myths. People are urged to report instances of misrepresentation of science through this online tool.

CTPA is the public voice of the cosmetic, toiletry and perfumery industry in the UK and seeks to help the media, consumers and other organisations understand the facts and the science behind cosmetic products, as well as the way in which they are regulated.

www.ctpa.org.uk | www.thefactsabout.co.uk | www.catie.org.uk | Twitter | LinkedIn | Instagram | YouTube





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Sackville House, 40 Piccadilly, London W1J 0DR | tel: +44 (0) 20 7491 8891
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