

18 Quaternium-15 – Patient Information

Your T.R.U.E. TEST results indicate that you have a contact allergy to quaternium-15, also known as Q-15. This contact allergy may cause your skin to react when it is exposed to this substance, although it may take several days for the symptoms to appear. Typical symptoms include redness, swelling, itching and fluid-filled blisters.

Quaternium-15 is a commonly used in personal care products such as cosmetics, soaps and shampoos. It belongs to a group of preservatives known as formaldehyde-releasing agents.

Where is quaternium-15 found?



At work, you may find quaternium-15 or formaldehyde-releasing agents in:

- Urea-formaldehyde foam insulation
- Electrode attachment gels used in healthcare
- Embalming and preserving fluids
- Pressed wood such as particleboard, medium density fiberboard (MDF), plywood, oriented strandboard (OSB)
- Urea-formaldehyde resins
- Metal working fluids and coolants
- Glues, inks, toners and paints
- Cleaning products, waxes and polishes



At home, you may find quaternium-15 or formaldehyde-releasing agents in:

- Cosmetics such as foundations and powders, blush, mascaras, eye shadows, eyeliners and pencils
- Durable press (wrinkle-resistant) fabrics
- Cleaning products, waxes, polishes and paints
- Tobacco and cigarette smoke
- Skin care products such as creams, lotions and moisturizers
- Personal hygiene items such as soaps, cleansers, and shampoos
- Smoke from wood, coal, kerosene or charcoal fires

How can you avoid quaternium-15?

- Don't use products with quaternium-15 on your face, hair or body. Only use products that do not list quaternium-15 on the label, ingredients list or Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). It may be wise to avoid products that contain other formaldehyde-releasing agents.
- Tell your physician, pharmacist, dentist, veterinarian, beautician and hairdresser that you are allergic to quaternium-15. Ask for preparations that do not contain quaternium-15 or other formaldehyde-releasing agents.
- If you must use products with quaternium-15 at work, on your children or pets, wear protective gloves. Heavy duty gloves made of natural or synthetic rubber, or vinyl, are good for working with products that contain quaternium-15.
- If you think that you contact quaternium-15 at work, ask your employer for MSDS or manufacturer information on the product(s). Talk to your employer about using a different product or wearing protective gloves and clothing.

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What should you look for and avoid?*

Products that include other quaternium substances are safe to use, but you should avoid products that list any of the following names in the ingredients, MSDS or package insert.

- **Quaternium-15** or chloroallyl methenamine chloride; hexamethylenetetramine chloroallyl chloride; 3,5,7-triaza-1-azoniaadamantane, 1-(3-chloroallyl)-, chloride; N-(3-chloroallyl)hexaminium chloride

You may also react to other formaldehyde-releasing agents such as:

- **Formaldehyde** or formalin; formic aldehyde; oxymethylene
- **Bronopol** or 2-bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol
- **Diazolidinyl urea** or N,N'-bis(hydroxymethyl) urea; 1-(1,3-bis(hydroxymethyl)-2,5-dioximidazolidin-4-yl)-1,3-bis(hydroxymethyl)urea
- **DMDM Hydantoin** or 1,3-cimethylol-5,5-dimethylhydantoin; 1,3-Bis(hydroxymethyl)-5,5-dimethylimidazolidine-2,4-dione
- **Imidazolidinyl urea** or imidurea; or N,N''-methylenebis(N'-(3-(hydroxymethyl)-2,5-dioxo-4-imidazolidinyl)urea
- **Tris nitro** or trimethylolnitromethane; 2-nitro-2-(hydroxymethyl)-1,3-propanediol; tris(hydroxymethyl)nitromethane; nitroisobutylglycerol

What are some products that may contain quaternium-15?*

- Aveeno® Skin Relief Body Wash
- Cover Girl® Fresh Look Pressed Powder
- Four Paws® Ferret Glow Shampoos
- Johnson's® Baby Baby Shampoo, Original
- Johnson's® Original Baby Shampoo,
- Maybelline® Great Lash Washable Mascara
- Blush By Cover Girl®
- Cover Girl® Simply Powder Foundation
- Johnson's® Creamy Baby Oil
- Johnson's® Baby Head-to-Toe Baby Wash
- Mr Bubble®, Bubble Bath, Original

What products do NOT contain quaternium-15 or related compounds?*

- Neutrogena® Soft Color Blush
- Pantene® Pro-V Shampoo
- Cetaphil® Gentle Cleansing Bar
- Lubrex® Gentle Hand Cleanser
- Almay® Nearly Naked Touch-Pad Liquid Blush
- Aveeno® Baby Wash & Shampoo
- Lubrex® Cream
- Aveda® Shampoo, Rosemary Mint
- Kiss My Face® Grape Jelli Bubble Wash
- Pet Scentsations® Premium Ferret Shampoo
- Curel® Continuous Comfort Moisturizing Lotion

*For additional information about products that might contain quaternium-15 or a related substance, go to the Household Product Database online (<http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov>) at the United States National Library of Medicine. These lists are brief and provide just a few examples. They are not comprehensive. Product formulations also change frequently. Read product labels carefully and talk to your doctor if you have questions. These are general guidelines. Talk to your doctor for more specific instructions.