

Alarming: Frequent allergy trigger "perfume" is in 70 percent of all cosmetic products

Eschen (FL), 8 December 2021. Perfume in cosmetics is a curse and a blessing. On the one hand, cosmetic products are supposed to "smell good". On the other hand, perfume poses a not inconsiderable risk of skin allergies - because after nickel, perfume is the most common allergen. Dermatologists consider fragrances in care products for children to be particularly problematic (Fölster-Holst 2009).

The international consumer protection portal has conducted product analyses of more than 46,000 cosmetic products in its web app [cosmeticanalysis.com](https://www.cosmeticanalysis.com). Perfume is contained in more than 32,000 products. The fragrances summarised under the INCI term perfume or aromatic substances are considered in the literature to be skin-irritating, allergy-triggering, can have a phototoxic effect and cause photoallergic reactions.

There are thousands of fragrances that are grouped under a single INCI term in the Cosmetics Ordinance - perfume. Exception: since spring 2007, fragrances, mostly of natural origin, must be listed individually on the packaging according to the Cosmetics Regulation, as the EU Commission sees a considerable allergy risk. These are: Alpha-Isomethyl Ionone, Amyl Cinnamal, Amylcinnamyl Alcohol, Anise Alcohol, Benzyl Alcohol, Benzyl Benzoate, Benzyl Cinnamate, Benzyl Salicylate, Butylphenyl Methylpropional, Cinnamal, Cinnamyl Alcohol, Citral, Citronellol, Coumarin, Eugenol, Evernia Furfuracea Extract, Evernia Prunastri Extract, Farnesol, Geraniol, Hexyl Cinnamal, Hydroxycitronellal, Hydroxyisohexyl 3-Cyclohexene Carboxaldehyde, Isoeugenol, Limonene, Linalool, Methyl 2-Octynoate.

Intolerance to fragrances usually manifests itself as contact allergy in the form of allergic contact eczema. In Germany, about 15 to 20 percent of the population is affected. Fragrances are the second most frequent triggers of contact allergies after nickel (15 percent).

Cosmetics are supposed to protect the skin, keep it healthy and make it look beautiful. To fulfil this purpose, the products must be formulated in a way that is kind to the skin. However, cosmetic ingredients do not always smell pleasant by nature. Manufacturers need a lot of skill and knowledge in formulating products so that they smell pleasant without perfume. Consumers should take a close look at which cosmetic products are good for their skin in the long term.

Günter W. Reichelt from Cosmetic Analysis advises: "If you suffer from contact allergies, you should rather avoid products with perfume. In any case, however, they should avoid those perfumes that are classified as particularly allergenic according to the Cosmetics Ordinance and must be listed separately on the packaging."

Note to editors

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With many unique selling points, the knowledge database of the manufacturer-neutral consumer protection portal Kosmetikanalyse comes up and is considered the world's leading premium portal.

Since 2008, consumers have been able to analyse as many products as they like on the international consumer protection portal using the manufacturer-neutral assessed ingredients database. A total of more than 46,000 analysed products of all categories are available, including detailed descriptions of ingredients.

Detailed information on almost 10,000 substances can be viewed in the ingredient database. More than 12,000 technical citations from over 100 technical publications provide the basis for more than 34,000 evaluated substance properties, which form the basis for the evaluation of the almost 10,000 ingredients.