

Your TRUE TEST results indicate that you have a contact allergy to balsam of Peru. 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.

Balsam of Peru is a fragrant resinous liquid harvested from trees grown in Central America. Not commonly used today, balsam of Peru may still be found as a fragrance, flavor, or antibacterial ingredient. Balsam of Peru contains a mixture of many substances related to cinnamon, vanilla and clove fragrances, and flavorings.

A positive patch test to balsam of Peru often indicates fragrance allergy.

WHERE IS BALSAM OF PERU FOUND?

At work, you may find balsam of Peru or one of its components used to add flavor or fragrance in the manufacture of:

- Herbal and botanical products
- Cleaning products
- Dental medicaments and cements
- Pesticides
- Scented candles
- Perfumes and colognes
- Scented tobaccos
- Some foods and spices
- Essential oils & aromatherapy products
- Air fresheners and deodorizers

At home, you may find balsam of Peru or one of its components in:

- Perfumes and colognes
- Cosmetics
- Insect repellents
- Medicinal creams and ointments
- Oral and lip medications
- Tomatoes, citrus
- Chocolates
- Chewing gums
- Flavored tobaccos
- Scented candles
- Baby powders
- Sunscreens, suntan lotions
- Hair conditioners and shampoos
- Medicated lozenges
- Pesticides
- Air fresheners and deodorizers
- Colas, sodas and flavored beverages
- Wines, liquors and aperitifs
- Cinnamon, vanilla and other spices
- Essential oils & aromatherapy products

Balsam of Peru may be found in veterinary preparations.

HOW CAN YOU AVOID BALSAM OF PERU?

- Only use products that do not list balsam of Peru or related chemicals on the label, ingredient list or Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).
- Choose fragrance-free personal care products and cosmetics. Avoid “unscented” products because they contain a masking fragrance related to balsam of Peru.
- **Be especially careful with diaper products and hemorrhoid treatments.**
- Tell your physician, pharmacist, dentist, veterinarian, beautician and hairdresser that you are allergic to balsam of Peru. Ask for preparations that do not contain balsam of Peru or related substances.
- If your symptoms are severe, your doctor may recommend a special diet to reduce your exposure to foods that may contain balsam of Peru in flavors and spices.
- Wear protective gloves. Gloves made of natural or synthetic rubber or vinyl are good for working with products that contain balsam of Peru – provided the gloves have no added flavors.

- If you think that you contact balsam of Peru at work, ask your employer for MSDS or manufacturer information on the product(s). Talk to your employer about using a different product or about wearing protective gloves and clothing.

WHAT SHOULD YOU LOOK FOR AND AVOID?*

Avoid products with the following names in the list of ingredients, MSDS, or package insert.

- Balsam of Peru or Myroxylon pereirae oleoresin; Peruvian balsam; balsam Peru oil or extract; balsam fir oleoresin or oil; hyperabsolute balsam, Peru; cinnamein, balsam of Tolu, China oil, black balsam, Surinam balsam, Indian balsam, Honduras balsam

Balsam of Peru may contain:

- Cinnamic or cinnamyl alcohol; 3-phenyl-2-propenoic acid; 3-phenylacrylic acid
- Cinnamal or cinnamic aldehyde; casia aldehyde; 3-phenyl-2-propenal
- Methyl cinnamate or methyl cinnamylate; cinnamic acid methyl ester; methyl 3-phenylpropenoate
- Benzyl cinnamate or cinnamein; cinnamic acid benzyl ester; phenylmethyl 3-phenyl-2-propenoate
- Vanillin or vanillic aldehyde; vanillaldehyde; 2-methoxy-4-(2-propenyl)phenol; 2-methoxy-4-allylphenol
- Eugenol or allylguaiacol; 2-methoxy-4-(2-propenyl)phenol; 2-methoxy-4-allylphenol
- Cinnamyl cinnamate or styracin; 3-phenylallyl cinnamate
- Benzoic alcohol
- Benzyl benzoate and other benzoates
- Benzyl acetate
- Benzoic acid
- Benzaldehyde
- Benzyl salicylate
- Cinnamic aldehyde
- Citrus peel
- Coniferyl alcohols
- Coumarin
- Farnesol
- Isoeugenol
- Nerolidol
- Resinous substances
- Tea Tree Oil

You also may react to substances related to balsam of Peru such as:

- Fragrance mix components
- Propolis balsam
- Balsam of Copaiba
- Essence of orange peel
- Turpentine
- Beeswax
- Diethylstilbestrol
- Spices (e.g. Jamaican pepper, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, paprika, curry, vanilla)
- Gum benzoin
- Colophony
- Tincture of krameria
- Balsam of Tolu
- Storax (Styrax)
- Wood tars
- Coumarin

*These lists are brief and provide just a few examples. Read product labels carefully and talk to your doctor if you have any questions. Product formulations may change from time to time without notice. Talk to your doctor for specific instructions. For additional information about products that might contain **balsam of Peru** or a related substance, go to the Household Products Database online (householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov) at the United States National Library of Medicine.