

Your TRUE TEST results indicate that you have a contact allergy to formaldehyde. 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.

Formaldehyde is used as a preservative and disinfectant in many industrial and household products. It is also used to finish durable press fabrics. Formaldehyde-releasing agents can be a common source of formaldehyde at home and at work.

WHERE IS FORMALDEHYDE FOUND?

At work, you may find formaldehyde and formaldehyde-releasing agents in:

- Urea-formaldehyde foam insulation and resins
- Finish treatments on some textiles and fabrics
- Embalming and preserving fluids
- Pressed wood such as particleboard, medium density fiberboard, plywood, and oriented strandboard
- Photographic developer chemicals
- Industrial metal working fluids and coolants
- Glues, inks, toners and paints
- Cleaning agents, waxes and polishes

At home, you may find formaldehyde and 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 FORMALDEHYDE?

- Wash new clothing and bedding several times in hot water before use. Avoid permanent press and wrinkle-resistant clothing.
- Only use products that do not list formaldehyde or formaldehyde-releasing agents on the label, ingredient list or Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). If no information is available, contact the product manufacturer.
- Tell your physician, pharmacist, dentist, veterinarian, beautician and hairdresser that you are allergic to formaldehyde. Ask for preparations that do not contain formaldehyde or formaldehyde-releasing agents.
- Wear protective gloves. Heavy-duty chemically resistant gloves made of natural or synthetic rubber may be good for working with formaldehyde. Use fabric or leather gloves to protect your hands from wood products that may contain formaldehyde.
- If you think that you contact formaldehyde 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.

- Formaldehyde or formalin; formic aldehyde; methaldehyde; methyl aldehyde; methylene oxide; N-methylol; oxymethylene

You also may react to formaldehyde-releasing preservatives such as:

- Bronopol, also known as 2-bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol
- Diazolidinyl urea, also known as N,N'-bis(hydroxymethyl) urea and 1-(1,3-Bis(hydroxymethyl)-2,5-dioximidazolidin-4-yl)-1,3-bis(hydroxymethyl) urea
- DMDM hydantoin, also known as 1,3-cimethylol-5,5-dimethylhydantoin and 1,3-Bis(hydroxymethyl)-5,5-dimethylimidazolidine-2,4-dione
- Imidazolidinyl urea, also known as imidurea and N,N'-methylenebis(N'-(3-(hydroxymethyl)-2,5-dioxo-4-imidazolidinyl)urea
- Tris nitro, also known as trimethylolnitromethane, nitroisobutylglycerol and 2-nitro-2-(hydroxymethyl)-1,3-propanediol, tris(hydroxymethyl)nitromethane
- Quaternium15, also known as chloroallyl methenamine chloride, N-(3-chloroallyl)hexaminium chloride and hexamethylenetetramine chloroallyl chloride

*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 **formaldehyde** or a related substance, go to the Household Products Database online (householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov) at the United States National Library of Medicine.