

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

Paraben mix contains the following five substances:

- Methyl p-hydroxybenzoate
- Ethyl p-hydroxybenzoate
- Propyl p-hydroxybenzoate
- Butyl p-hydroxybenzoate
- Benzyl p-hydroxybenzoate

Parabens are used as preservatives in many over-the-counter medications, cosmetics, and personal care and hygiene products.

WHERE IS PARABEN MIX OR ONE OF ITS COMPONENTS FOUND?

At work, you may find paraben mix or one of its components in the manufacture or use of:

- Metal-working oils and fluids
- Cosmetics
- Personal care and hygiene products
- Hair care products
- Agriculture-food production and processing
- Veterinary medications and pet care products
- Antiseptic topical medications

At home, you may find paraben mix or one of its components in:

- Lipsticks and lip balms
- Pet care and grooming products
- Soaps, cleansers and hygiene products
- Topical medications for skin pain or infections or hemorrhoid treatments
- Skin ointments, creams, lotions, sunscreens and moisturizers
- Shaving products
- Preservatives used in some foods
- Shampoo, conditioner, hair coloring and hair care products
- Cosmetics such as foundations and powders, blush, mascaras, eye shadows, eyeliners and pencils, lipsticks, quick-dry nail products, bronzers, makeup removers

Parabens are found in many dermatological creams, ear and nose drops, rectal and vaginal medications, bandages and local anesthetics.

HOW CAN YOU AVOID PARABEN MIX AND ITS COMPONENTS?

- Use products that do not list paraben mix or related chemicals on the label, ingredients list, product insert or Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). If no information is available, talk to your pharmacist or contact the product manufacturer.
- Some patients who are allergic to paraben mix can wear cosmetics that contain parabens without reacting, but you should stop using a product if skin symptoms develop. Eating foods containing paraben preservatives is rarely a problem.
- Tell your physician, pharmacist, dentist, veterinarian, beautician and hairdresser that you are allergic to paraben mix or one of its components. Ask for preparations that do not contain paraben mix or related substances.
- If you must use products that contain parabens on pets or children, wear protective gloves. Utility or disposable gloves made of natural or synthetic rubber or vinyl are good for working with products that contain paraben mix or one of its components.
- If you think that you contact paraben mix or one of its components 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.

- Methyl p-hydroxybenzoate or methylparaben; 4-hydroxybenzoic acid methyl ester; methyl parahydroxybenzoate; p-methoxycarbonylphenol
- Ethyl p-hydroxybenzoate or ethylparaben; 4-hydroxybenzoic acid ethyl ester; ethyl p-oxybenzoate; p-carbethoxyphenol
- Propyl p-hydroxybenzoate or propylparaben; 4-hydroxybenzoic acid propyl ester
- Butyl p-hydroxybenzoate or butylparaben; 4-hydroxybenzoic acid butyl ester
- Benzyl p-hydroxybenzoate or benzylparaben; phenylmethyl 4-hydroxybenzoate; p-hydroxybenzoic acid benzyl ester

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