

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

Potassium dichromate is a chromium salt or chromate and is a common metal in the earth's crust. Chromium and chromates occur naturally in our environment, including in soil and water. They are also common ingredients in products made of chrome, stainless steel, cement and leather.

WHERE IS POTASSIUM DICHROMATE (OR CHROMIUM) FOUND?

At work, you may find chromates or chromium in:

- Construction materials such as cement, mortar, concrete, bricks, plaster, drywall
- Leather tanning and product manufacturing
- Primers and chromate-based pigments in paints
- Cutting oils, corrosion inhibitors, oils, fuels and drilling muds
- Liners in high temperature industrial furnaces
- Pyrotechnics
- Printing inks
- Manufacturing, plating and metal working with chrome alloys and stainless steel
- Orthopedic and dental implants, dental prostheses
- Wood preservative manufacturing
- Green dyes used in felt and textiles
- Chrome alloy welding fumes
- Chromic surgical gut sutures

At home, you may find chromates or chromium in:

- Orthopedic and dental implants, dental prostheses
- Leather products including shoes, boots, gloves
- Pigments in inks and paints
- Construction materials such as cement, mortar, concrete, bricks, plaster, drywall
- Green dyes used in felt and textiles
- Make up
- Foods and vitamin supplements
- Pressure-treated wood
- Household repair materials

HOW CAN YOU AVOID POTASSIUM DICHROMATES (OR CHROMIUM)?

- Allergic skin reactions to chromates (or chromium) can become severe and chronic. Therefore, it's important to avoid touching chromates or inhaling chrome alloy fumes or getting them on your clothing.
- Only use products that do not list chromates (or chromium) or related chemicals on the label, ingredient list or Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). If no information is available, contact the product manufacturer.
- Avoid tanned leather products unless vegetable tannins have been used. Use instead vegetable tanned leather shoes or plastic shoes. For those with shoe dermatitis from chromate and leather, wearing heavy socks and reducing perspiration and moisture may help to reduce dermatitis.
- Do not handle burnt matches or ash. Use a lighter instead.
- In the workplace, avoid wet cement and mortar. Even the dust or fumes from chromate-containing products should be avoided. Chromate-reduced cement added ferrous sulphate is an alternative. Change oils and cutting fluids used in machine work often.
- Tell your physician, pharmacist, dentist, veterinarian, beautician and hairdresser that you are allergic to chromates (or chromium). Ask for preparations that do not contain chromates or related substances.
- Wear protective gloves and clothing. Heavy-duty and utility gloves of natural or synthetic rubber or vinyl may provide adequate protection for working with products that contain chromates (or chromium). Heavy-duty fabric or canvas gloves may be substituted for leather gloves.
- If you think that you contact chromates (or chromium) 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.

- Potassium dichromate or dipotassium dichromate (or bichromate)
- Chromium compounds
- Chromium and chromium salts
- Chromium metal or chrome
- Chromic acid salts

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