

Understanding fragrance allergies and the common symptoms



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Fragrances are used by people to smell nice and remove body odor, there are many types of fragrances that can be categorized into either chemical or natural perfumes based on the ingredients used to make them. In most cases, the chemical scents are more toxic than their counterparts and may cause adverse allergies if not used correctly. Below are some common allergic reactions that one may experience when using this product.

1. Peeling of skin. Some fragrances can cause skin dryness when used in excess, this in turn makes your dermis become pale, dark and flaky. The situation becomes worse if it accidentally reaches conspicuous parts of the skin such as the face, where it can make the user unsightly markings that are hard to remove. Moreover, uneven skin flaking may expose one to bacterial infection since the internal organs would not be adequately protected.
2. Weakening of the tear glands. In case these perfumes accidentally enter the eye while spraying then they may rupture your tear glands, this can make one appear like they are constantly crying even if it's not true. Some of the fragrances may also cause irritation of the eye and partial blindness for some limited time duration.

The frequency of these allergic reactions has greatly increased over the last few years due to production of more sophisticated perfumes, some of which contain exotic ingredients that are only found abroad. In medical terms, an allergy refers to immune system disorder where the body's defenses become hypersensitive and perceives any foreign substance, including fragrances, as a potential threat to the body. As such, the immune structure would be triggered to release a unique chemical known as histamine.

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Histamine compound is often responsible for the perceptible reactions that one may see after applying the fragrance, some of which include sneezing, headaches, nasal congestion, hives, skin rashes and asthma amongst others.

Causes of fragrance allergy

Though many people blame particular perfume brands for triggering allergic reactions in their bodies, experts widely believe that these reactions are caused by harsh chemical composition of modern commercial scents.

Therefore, an otherwise mild product that has been masked with lab-manufactured aromatic ingredients would trigger certain reactions.

However, researchers have not been able to forthrightly determine whether it's one compound or a combination of many that are causing such allergic reactions. Some perfumes also have irritant effects and may cause choking and breathing difficulties especially when used in excess.

Among the wide selection of chemicals found in the perfumes, only a few of them are suspected to trigger sensitivity such as cinnamon alcohol, eugenol, cinnamon aldehyde, geraniol, oakmoss absolute and hydroxycitronellal.

Though these compounds are mainly used in making fragrances they may also be found in household air-fresheners, they make people become susceptible to respiratory disorders. Furthermore, chemicals like acetone, benzyl alcohol, camphor, ethyl acetate and ethanol can also cause irritation in the user's respiratory tract.

Other symptoms of allergy

The most common symptoms of sensitivity to a fragrance include sneezing, headaches, running nose, concentration problems, eczema and hives or skin rash. The condition may also cause mild nausea, which can make one vomit uncontrollably in case he took food before being exposed to the fragrance. In addition, for some people these symptoms usually disappear once the smell is out of their range, while for others the reactions would be experienced more frequently and even become more intense with every repeated exposure.

Though these allergies may appear somewhat similar to the symptoms of those caused by natural substances like dander and pollen grains, experts are of the opinion that considerable differences exist between the two forms of allergy. In most natural ingredients, immune system usually perceives allergens as invaders and releases antibodies to fight them back. However, some chemical fragrance ingredients are too minute and cannot be easily detected by one's body defenses. Hence, when they reach the skin they can totally modify it by binding up with the dermis. The body usually mistakes such modified proteins as foreign substances, and may attack them indiscriminately thus causing more serious allergic reactions.

Apart from the scented products, many fragrance-free substances may also trigger hypersensitivity since they contain imperceptible chemicals that one unknowingly inhales. Therefore, it's appropriate to test any new perfume on a small section of the skin before buying it; this would help you know if the product may cause adverse symptoms later on. One can also visit a qualified dermatologist or physician to know more concerning any potential allergies,

including any precautions that should be followed for prevent consecutive recurrences.

It's advisable not to apply perfume when visiting official places such as the workplace, some people may be irritated by it and show reactions even if they may not appear in you. This would in turn affect their overall productivity rate. So, if people hold their noses when you're passing know that the perfume you applied in the morning could be the problem.

Reliable sources

<http://www.webmd.com/allergies/features/fragrance-allergies-a-sensory-assault>

<http://askjan.org/media/fragrance.html>

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/allergies/fragrance-sensitivity.aspx>

3. Difference between Perfumer's Alcohol and Formulator's Alcohol?

Many of us are familiar with alcohol since we drink it for leisure. But did you know that there are different types of alcohol? Well the most common ones are formulator's and perfumer's alcohol. Below we will discuss the two forms of alcohol to help you know their characteristics and uses.

1. Formulator's alcohol is usually found in household products like air fresheners and line sprays, this product is usually milder than Perfumer's Alcohol and therefore doesn't cause adverse allergic reactions. The substance can also be found in liquor since it's quite

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edible, on the other hand Perfumer's Alcohol is specially formulated to maximize and hold onto the scent of fragrances.

2. Perfumer's alcohol may also be used in the generation of diffuser oils, where it usually makes the blended solution remain spotlessly clean and free from cloudiness. Formulator's alcohol can be used for faster fermentation of yeast that can be used to prepare bread, however after the fermentation process it can safely be removed through distillation.
3. Perfumer's alcohol also consists of three sub-ingredients while Formulator's naturally exists by itself. These compounds include; Denatured Ethanol which acts as the main carrier ingredient in fragrance oils. It easily evaporates when warmed by one's skin temperature and evenly distributes fragrances around the surface. Isopropyl myristat, it helps in absorption of essential oils and fragrances into the alcoholic solution. Monopropylene glycol. This is a co-solvent product that also allows fragrance oil constituents to be solubilized into the alcohol carrier. The process helps in controlling the rate of evaporation so that alcohol doesn't fade away too quickly.
4. Formulators Alcohol is odorless and cannot be mixed with other substances to form some positive reaction, and this is because of its mild basic nature. On the other hand, Perfumer's alcohol contains an extra ingredient which allows other substances to mix nicely and permanently. It can easily support a ratio of 66% alcohol and 33% pure perfume oil, nevertheless most commercial fragrance sprays contain 20% perfume essentials lipids while colognes have a lesser composition of 10%. Those who use copulin scents should be careful

when applying then, always try to avoid the clothes and hair since once the substance has corrosive effects. Perfumer's alcohol is a better alternative since it settles down easily and sustains the skin's lustrous nature.

5. Purity levels may also vary between the two alcohol compounds.

Formulator's have an average purity rate of 75% while their counterparts only contain only 30-40% of the original substance. These products can nowadays be bought alone from professional liquor vendors, this means that you don't have to buy a perfume that contains Perfumer's Alcohol but rather the ingredient itself.

Formulation Type	Fragrance or Essential Oil	Perfumer's alcohol	Formulators alcohol	Distilled water Distillate
Cologne	20%	Nil	70% to 85%	10-15%
Perfume	20% to 30%	65-80%	65-80%	0 to 5%
Eau de Toilette	5% to 10%	Nil	75-80%	15%
Room or Linen Sprays	3-7%	Nil	20-30%	63% to 77%
Aftershave	2-5%	Nil	75% to 83%	15-20%
Eau de Cologne	12-17%	Nil	78-88%	10% to 15%

Perfumer and Fermentor's alcohol uses

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They can be applied in making homemade fragrances in a more professional way. This is because they make a nice solvent even when mixed with resinous oils. One can also blend it with absolutes, isolated aromatic chemicals and organic scents. When added to absolutes, they make the substance smell stronger and more appealing than essential oils; they can thus be used in custom perfumery processes. Moreover, some scented plants are very delicate and can hardly be steam-distilled or pressed to remove the essential oils found inside, the Jasmine flower is one such example. However, Perfumers are easier to process even from home.

It helps in synthesis of aroma chemical which are either synthetically produced or refined in the lab, for instance, the compound known as vanillin which gives vanilla cream its pure characteristic scent and flavor. Artificial vanilla used for making perfumes is usually synthetic and is usually produced by mixing it with Perfumer's Alcohol. This helps in soothing down the scent and releasing a sweeter aroma that is also safer.

The Fermentor's substance has also been found to help fragrances last much longer, it contains synthesizers that improve aroma and also slow down the rate of evaporation especially when out in the open sun. The unique alcohol provides a layer of protection when mixed with essential oils, thus ensuring that one stays fresh throughout the day without smelling of sweat.

Perfumer's alcohol blends well with substances like resinous, benzoin, sticky oils, orris and vetiver. These are natural scents with an earthy appeal that even deepens when the alcohol is added. Nevertheless, after using these substances it's advisable to wash hands so as to avoid contamination. Also

keep them in a safe place away from direct sunlight preferably in a cool cabinet, this protects the aromatic liquid from evaporating away.

References

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