



CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE

170 Ghim Moh Road, #05-01, Ulu Pandan Community Building, Singapore 279621

Hotline: 6100 0315 Fax: 6467 9055

Website: www.case.org.sg

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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CASE finds shampoo with more than three times the permissible limit of allergens

The Consumers Association of Singapore ("CASE") commissioned a test on 25 shampoos sold in Singapore for allergy-causing substances. One sample, EverFresh Anti-dandruff Shampoo 500ml, exceeded regulatory limits by more than three times for the total concentration of methylisothiazolinone ("MIT") and methylchloroisothiazolinone ("CMIT"). Exposure to high concentration of these substances may lead to skin sensitisation. Consumers who have purchased or are using EverFresh Anti-dandruff Shampoo 500ml are advised to stop using it and to dispose of it immediately.

Background

There have been several studies on the presence of allergens that are commonly found in shampoos.

In particular, a study conducted by the Hong Kong Consumer Council in 2017 found MIT and CMIT in 20% of the tested samples of products sold in Hong Kong. MIT and CMIT are widely used as preservatives to inhibit bacterial growth in liquid cosmetic and personal care products. Prolonged exposure can cause skin irritation and allergic skin reactions.

The Hong Kong study also found that more than 60% of these samples tested contained 1,4-dioxane, a common contaminant. 1,4-dioxane is usually generated as a by-product in the manufacturing of personal care products such as shampoo. Short term exposure to 1,4-dioxane may cause eye and nose irritation, and prolonged exposure can lead to an increased risk of cancer.

Given that shampoo is an essential hair care product used by many, CASE commissioned a test on 25 shampoos sold in Singapore for MIT, CMIT, and 1,4-dioxane. This is in line with CASE's efforts to protect the interest of consumers in the area of product safety and standards.

Regulations

Shampoos are cosmetic products regulated under the Health Products (Cosmetic Products – ASEAN Cosmetic Directive) Regulations.

Under the Regulations, the maximum allowed concentration for MIT and CMIT for preservative use in rinse-off cosmetic products such as shampoos is 15 parts per million (ppm) weight for weight (w/w). 1,4-dioxane is a prohibited ingredient.

Cosmetic products are required to list all the ingredients, such as MIT and CMIT, contained in the product, on the product labels.

Scope and Methodology

The 25 samples for this test were selected by random sampling with samples purchased from pharmacies, convenience/value stores in the heartlands, as well as popular e-commerce websites.

The samples were tested using accredited methodologies. The test for MIT and CMIT was conducted using a High Performance Liquid Chromatography-Diode Array Detector method. The test for 1,4-dioxane was conducted using a Headspace Gas Liquid Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry method.

Test Results

According to the test results, no trace of 1,4-dioxane could be found in all 25 samples. 24 out of 25 samples were within the permissible limit of 15 ppm (w/w) for total concentration of both MIT and CMIT. The full findings of the test can be found in Annex A.

One sample, EverFresh Anti-dandruff Shampoo 500ml, was found to have exceeded the regulatory limit for the total concentration of MIT and CMIT by more than three times at 53.01 ppm (w/w). Photographs of this product can be found in Annex B.

Follow-up Actions

The Health Sciences Authority has been alerted to this and on 6 March 2020 directed the relevant companies that imported the product to stop sales and recall the product from the market.

Consumers who have purchased or are using EverFresh Anti-dandruff Shampoo 500ml are advised to stop using it and to dispose of it immediately.

Consumer Advice

CASE would like to advise consumers on the following:

- Check the product label for special instructions, warnings and ingredients before you buy. If you are allergic or have sensitive skin, avoid products with MIT and CMIT in its ingredient list.
- Do not buy a product if there is no product label.
- Look out for allergic reactions when you switch to a new product.
- Stop using the product and seek immediate medical attention if you encounter allergic reactions.
- Buy only from reliable and reputable sources.

Lim Biow Chuan
President
Consumers Association of Singapore

Annex A – List of 25 Shampoo Products Tested and the Results

S/N	Name/Label	Sample Details	Methylisothiazolinone (ppm, w/w)	Methylchlorisothiazolinone (ppm, w/w)	1,4 Dioxane (ppm, w/w)
S01	Alpecin Tuning Shampoo 200ml	C91117 07/2020	ND	ND	ND
S02	Botaneco Organic Argan & Virgin Olive Oil Shampoo 290ml	MFG 22/06/2019 009 EXP 21/06/2022	4.90	7.13	ND
S03	EverFresh Anti-dandruff Shampoo 500ml	Batch No.: RJ1911001 MFG: 07/11/2019 EXP: 06/11/2022	12.05	40.96	ND
S04	Follow Me Green Tea Soft & Smooth Shampoo 650ml	19D27IGHH6 MFG 270419	3.30	6.10	ND
S05	Grafen Root Booster 500ml	4612U EXP 2022.11.12	ND	ND	ND
S06	Inecto Naturals Argan Shampoo 500ml	W1912132	ND	ND	ND
S07	Johnson's Baby Shampoo Camomila 750ml	1038P	ND	ND	ND
S08	Lifebuoy Anti-hairfall Shampoo 340ml	EXP 170122 2	< 3	6.88	ND
S09	L'oreal Elseve Straight Intense 330ml	80P900 MFG 0917 EXP 0920	ND	ND	ND
S10	Malizia Shampoo Dry and Damage Hair 300ml	B08ED150921	< 3	ND	ND

S11	Marc Anthony Extra Hydrating Shampoo 250ml	08 2022 190863A	< 3	< 6	ND
S12	Maro Deo Scalp Shampoo 400ml	Use by: 04-2022 ID19VB	ND	ND	ND
S13	Meera Shikakai and Badam Shampoo 180ml	A-19L1, 09/19, F 08/22	ND	ND	ND
S14	Natur Vital Reinforcing Shampoo 300ml	EXP: 01/24 N0716A	ND	ND	ND
S15	Palmolive Intensive Moisture Shampoo & Conditioner 350ml	051021 TH1116 M05003	ND	ND	ND
S16	Pureen Family Jojoba Shampoo 750ML	9P0556P MFG: 25/02/19 EXP: 25/02/22	ND	ND	ND
S17	Redwin Coal Tar Fragrance Shampoo 250ml	B050719E	< 3	7.58	ND
S18	Rejoice Rich Soft Smooth Shampoo 600ml	B04-07082019 92194811P2	< 3	< 6	ND
S19	Safi Shayla Anti Dandruff Shampoo 520g	MFG: 10/19 788	ND	ND	ND
S20	Sensez Beauty Hair Fall Control Shampoo with Tea Tree and Lemon Extract 380ml	ECB 1727 MFG 082019 0831	< 3	< 6	ND
S21	Synaa Hibiscus Shampoo 400ml	Batch No.: 1901 Mfg. Date: 04/2019 Exp. Date: 03/2022	ND	ND	ND
S22	TRESemme Detox & Nourish Shampoo 330ml	MFG: 1210182 EXP: 120421	ND	ND	ND

S23	Tutti Frutti Argan Oil And Cranberry Shampoo 100ml	08.2020 28992177	ND	ND	ND
S24	VS Sassoon Texturized Straight Shampoo 750ml	P20220809 92210386F2	< 3	< 6	ND
S25	花王 Scalp Care Long Lasting Anti Odour Lemongrass & Chamomile 750ml	20190514 F0231349	ND	ND	ND

* Note:

ND: Not Detected

Limit of detection/quantification for Methylisothiazolinone: 1.0 / 3.0 (ppm, w/w)

Limit of detection/quantification for Methylchlorisothiazolinone: 2.0 / 6.0 (ppm, w/w)

Limit of detection/quantification for 1,4 Dioxane: 20.0 (ppm, w/w)

Failed Limit

Annex B – Photographs of EverFresh Anti-dandruff Shampoo 500ml

