



CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE

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MEDIA RELEASE

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CASE: Hair dyes do not contain excessive skin sensitisers

The Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) has found that hair dyes sold in Singapore do not contain excessive skin sensitisers that may trigger allergic reactions in people with sensitive skins.

Earlier this year, CASE commissioned a test on 20 hair dyes sold in Singapore. The test results showed that the 20 hair dyes are safe and do not exceed the safety limits set for the following skin sensitisers:

- p-Phenylenediamine (PPD)
- Toluene-2,5-diamine (PTD)
- m-Aminophenol (MAP)
- Resorcinol

Why is CASE testing hair dyes?

To achieve permanent colour changes, popular hair dyes may contain chemicals such as PPD, PTD, MAP and resorcinol. These chemicals, which are found in dyes for home and salon use, are also skin sensitisers that may trigger allergic dermatitis, blisters and rashes on the scalp and face in individuals with sensitive skin. Such reactions may occur up to two days after the treatment. Skin sensitisers in hair dyes are also believed to have triggered fatal reactions in two cases in Britain in 2011 and 2012.

Despite the risks, some hair dyes in other Asian markets continue to contain high amounts of skin sensitisers. In 2015, the Hong Kong Consumer Council conducted a test on 25 models of hair dyes and found MAP in 20 of them, with the concentration in one model exceeding the limit of 2.0% set by the Chinese authorities. Although the concentration of PPD and/or PTD in all the dyes was found to be within the limits set by China and the EU, the Hong Kong Consumer Council cited studies showing that a concentration of 1.0% was sufficient to trigger a reaction in some people with sensitive skin.

What are the regulations in Singapore?

Hair dyes in Singapore must comply with the Health Products (Cosmetic Products – ASEAN Cosmetic Directive) Regulations 2007, which match the European Union's Regulations on cosmetic products. The following are the limits set under the ASEAN Cosmetic Directive:

| Substance | Permitted concentration after mixing |
|---|--|
| p-Phenylenediamine (PPD) and its salts | Must not exceed 2% (calculated as free base) |
| Toluene-2,5-diamine (PTD) and its salts | Must not exceed 4% (calculated as free base) |
| m-Aminophenol (MAP) | Must not exceed 1.2% |
| Resorcinol | Must not exceed 1.25% |

Test details and results

CASE purchased a total of 20 samples encompassing a variety of hair dyes of different shades, brands and countries of manufacture, focussing on permanent hair dyes for home use. They were purchased from personal care chains, departmental stores and neighbourhood retail shops.

The samples were tested for their PPD, PTD, MAP and resorcinol content at CASE's designated test laboratory. All the samples passed the tests and the results may be viewed in Annex A.

Recommendations

CASE advises consumers using hair dyes at home to follow the manufacturers' usage directions carefully. Mixing the products correctly ensures that there are minimal residual skin sensitisers in the dye. They can also minimise skin contact with the dyes by using protective gloves and applying Vaseline to their ears, hairline and neck before dyeing their hair. Consumers who develop skin problems after dyeing their hair should stop using them immediately and seek medical attention, while those who are unsure of their reaction to these chemicals may wish to seek medical advice in advance.

CASE is committed to protecting the interests of consumers and will continue to highlight any unfair or unsafe practices in the marketplace.

Lim Biow Chuan
 President
 Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE)

ANNEX A: RESULTS OF TEST FOR PPD, MAP, RESORCINOL AND PTD IN HAIR DYES

*Where the percentage is listed as N.D., the skin sensitiser was not detected in the sample.

| No. | Brand | Model and Shade | PPD | | PTD | | MAP | | Resorcinol | |
|-----|---|-------------------------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|------------|------|
| | | | Indicated | % | Indicated | % | Indicated | % | Indicated | % |
| 1 | Bigen Speedy Hair Color Conditioner | No. 883 Dark Brown | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. | Yes | 0.01 | Yes | 0.04 |
| 2 | Color & Soin Permanent Hair Dye with Vegetal Extracts | 3N Dark Chestnut | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. |
| 3 | DK Cosmetics Squid Ink Well-Being Treatment Color | 3N Dark Brown | Yes | 0.02 | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. |
| 4 | Daeng Gi Meo Ri Medicinal Herb Hair Color | Dark Brown | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | 0.22 |
| 5 | Eric Favre Beauty Hair Color | 3.0 Dark Chestnut Brown | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. |
| 6 | Garnier Olia Permanent Hair Colour | 4.0 Dark Brown | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. |
| 7 | Gatsby Hair Color Remake | 1 Natural Black | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | 0.55 |
| 8 | Hemani Henna | Black with bakhour | No | N.D. | No | N.D. | No | N.D. | No | N.D. |
| 9 | Henna Plus | 5.35 Chocolate Brown | No | N.D. | Yes | 0.16 | Yes | N.D. | Yes | 0.06 |
| 10 | Keranove Oleo Color Permanent Hair Color | 1 Noir Obscur | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. |

| No. | Brand | Model and Shade | PPD | | PTD | | MAP | | Resorcinol | |
|-----|--|----------------------------------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|------------|------|
| | | | Indicated | % | Indicated | % | Indicated | % | Indicated | % |
| 11 | Laila Herbal Henna | - | No | N.D. | No | N.D. | No | N.D. | No | N.D. |
| 12 | Liese Creamy Bubble Color | Natural Mocha | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. |
| 13 | Lolane Aroma Color Cream | L23 4.4 Copper Brown | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. |
| 14 | Lucido Hair Color One Push Type | Natural Black | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | 0.01 | Yes | 0.04 |
| 15 | NaturVital Permanent Hair Colour | 4 Chestnut | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. |
| 16 | Petrole Hahn | 30 Dark Brown | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | 0.11 |
| 17 | Phytocolor | 5NC Coppery Hazel Light Chestnut | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. | No | N.D. |
| 18 | Revlon Top Speed | 60M Natural Brown | Yes | 0.02 | No | N.D. | Yes | 0.01 | Yes | 0.01 |
| 19 | Sewha B Happy Hair Color Cream | 4R Cherry Wine | Yes | N.D. | No | N.D. | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. |
| 20 | Syoss Oleo Permanent Intensive Oil Color | 4-00 Medium Brown | No | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. | Yes | N.D. |