

PARABEN

_____ Name

_____ Date

also called... **methylparaben, ethylparaben, propylparaben, butylparaben, or benzylparaben** in personal care products. Other sources may list the chemical names, which have the same beginning, but end with **-parahydroxybenzoate** or **-parahydroxybenzoic acid** instead of **-paraben**.

What is it?

The parabens are popular preservatives used in many cosmetic products, topical medications, and some foods to prevent bacterial and fungal contamination.

Where might it be found?

moisturizing lotion, cream
make-up foundation, concealer
powder, blush, bronzer
lipstick, lip liner, lip balm, gloss
eye shadow, eyeliner, mascara
eyebrow pencil
make-up remover
facial cleanser, cleansing pads
body wash, soap, foam
shampoo, conditioner
hair styling gel, mousse
hair color
toothpaste, dentifrice
deodorant, antiperspirant
shave gel or cream, depilatory
cuticle remover
quick-dry nail product
sunscreen, spray tan product
acne treatment
cold sore remedy
anti-itch lotion
nipple ointment, balm
vaginal medication
personal lubricant
hemorrhoid remedy
diaper rash ointment
athlete's foot cream
shoe polish
ultrasound gel
Unna boot dressing, bandage
gel-like toys, toy slime
pet shampoo
glues
metalworking fluids, oils

Also may be found in these prescriptions:

Prescription topical agents for eye, ear, and nose
Prescription skin products, including *some*
benzoyl peroxide, clindamycin, clocortolone,
desonide, eflornithine, fluocinolone acetonide,
fluorouracil, fluticasone, hydrocortisone,
hydroquinone, imiquimod, metronidazole, salicylic
acid, sertaconazole, sodium sulfacetamide,
tretinoin, and urea.
Oral medications, e.g. haloperidol syrup
Local anesthetic
Injectable forms of anesthetics, antibiotics,
antihypertensives, chemotherapy, corticosteroids,
diuretics, heparin, insulin, and vitamins.

How to avoid it:

Do not use products that contain *any* of the **parabens**. Check the complete ingredient list of everything you use. For products already at home that do not list ingredients, go to the store and inspect the original box or package. Some products' ingredients are found on the internet at the manufacturer's or store's website, or at <http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov>, <http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com>, or <http://www.drugstore.com>.

Caution your partner, hairdresser, physician, nurse, and others to avoid products containing parabens in your care. To identify possible workplace exposure, check the complete ingredient list of each product encountered. Wear protective gloves if you must come in contact with parabens as you care for children, elders, or pets.

NOTE: Rarely cross-reactions occur to paraphenylene diamine (hair dye), PABA sunscreens, benzocaine, disperse dyes, hydrochlorothiazide, and sulfa drugs.

Some persons who are sensitive to parabens notice a flare when they eat certain foods that contain high levels of these chemicals. Your doctor may suggest you try a one month diet free of all such foods to see if you improve. Be sure to check the ingredient labels of everything you ingest for a type of -paraben, a -parahydroxybenzoate, or a -parahydroxybenzoic acid.

Some foods that may contain parabens:

salad dressings	processed vegetables
mayonnaise	frozen dairy products
mustard	gelatin and pudding
ketchup	marmalade, jelly, jam
spiced sauces	soft drinks
tomato pulp	cider
tomato puree	fruit juices
pickles, relishes	sugar substitutes
syrup	liquid dietary supplement
baked goods	fats and oils
soft candy	packaged meat, fish, poultry
coated nuts	marinated fish
cereal snack	jelly coated meat product
potato snack	dried meat surface coating