

Cosmetic Product Ingredients to Avoid

Ingredients	Why they include them and why we should avoid them
Benzalkonium chloride (BAK)	Preservative. This is toxic to several of your cells that are essential for creating healthy tears. It also has anti-bacterial properties, which is bad because it disrupts the natural balance of your tear film.
Cinnamates	Fragrance. This is pro-inflammatory and incorrectly activates receptors on the corneal nerves.
DMDM hydantoin	Formaldehyde donating preservative. Irritant.
EDTA	Preservative. Disrupts tear film stability.
Formaldehyde	Preservative. Irritant to corneal nerves, causes burning, itching, redness, tearing, and dose dependent Meibomian and epithelial cell death.
Fragrance	Fragrance. Irritant. It can cause allergic reaction and contact dermatitis.
Hydroxymethylglycinate	Formaldehyde donating preservative. Irritant
Nylon fibers	Lengthening agent in mascara. This can cause inflammation from the foreign material that gets into the eyes.
Parabens (methyl-, isobutyl-, propyl-)	Preservative. Toxic to the Meibomian cells, xenoestrogens can potentially disrupt hormone function.
Phenoxyethanol	Non-formaldehyde-donating preservative (often marketed as "paraben-free", This has been shown to cause death of the oil glands, even at low concentrations.
Phthalates	Plasticizer and solvent. Pro-inflammatory. Decreased cell proliferation of corneal endothelial cells.
Quaternium 15	Formaldehyde donating preservative. Pro-inflammatory.
Vitamin A metabolites (Retinol, Retinoic Acid, Retinaldehyde)	Anti-aging skin products. When used near the orbit of the eye (eye socket) the oil glands become damaged. The consistent application of this ingredient causes severe atrophy of the Meibomian glands and can lead to severe symptoms from dry eye syndrome.
Sodium lauryl sulfates	Surfactant. A common irritant, and it strips natural oils.
Toluene	Solvent. Pro-inflammatory.
Triclosan and Triclocarban	Preservative and stabilizer. Pro-inflammatory.
Urea - (anything with urea in the name)	Formaldehyde-donating-preservative. Irritant.

Words like "hypoallergenic", "ophthalmologist or dermatologist tested," "natural," "organic," "gentle for sensitive eyes," and "clinically proven" are not regulated by the FDA and are thus they do not necessarily have any value.

Do not "tightline," or apply eyeliner to the delicate waterline of the eyelid, in order to avoid damaging the oil glands and disrupting the tear film.