

Benzyl alcohol

(B-008)

Your patch testing results indicate that you have a contact allergy to **Benzyl alcohol**. It is important that you familiarize yourself with this chemical and take steps to avoid coming in contact with it.

i What is **Benzyl alcohol** and where is it found?

This compound is used in photographic development, perfumes, the food industry, pharmaceuticals as a bacteriostatic, cosmetics, ointments, emulsions, textiles, sheet plastics and inks. It is also used as a solvent for dyestuffs, cellulose esters, cellulose acetate, casein, gelatin, waxes, shellac and insect repellents. Further research may identify additional product or industrial usages of this chemical.

i What else is **Benzyl alcohol** called?

This chemical can be identified by different names, including:

*Alpha-Hydroxytoluene**Alpha-toluenol**Benzoyl alcohol**Benzenemethanol**Benzenecarbinol**Hydroxytoluene**(hydroxymethyl)benzene**Phenylcarbinol**Phenylmethyl alcohol**Phenylmethanol*

This may not be a complete list as manufacturers introduce and delete chemicals from their product lines.

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP MANAGE YOUR CONTACT ALLERGY

- Be vigilant ... read the product label.** Always take the time to read the ingredient listing on product packages. This should be your first step *each* time you purchase a product as manufacturers sometimes change product ingredients. If you have any concerns ask your pharmacist or your doctor.
- Test the product first.** If you have purchased a new product you should test it on a small skin area to see if you get a reaction before using the product on larger skin areas.
- Advise people you obtain services from of your contact allergy.** This should include people like your pharmacist, doctor, hairdresser, florist, veterinarian, etc.
- Inform your employer if the source of your contact allergy is work related.** You should identify the specific source of the chemical and take the necessary steps to avoid further exposure. Protective wear may be adequate or you may need to make a change in your work activities. Both you and your employer benefit when the cause of your occupational dermatitis is eliminated.
- “Google” it.** The internet is an excellent source of ingredient information that can be searched by product, by company and by specific chemical. Some helpful independent internet links include:
 - www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/factsheets/factsheets.html** (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services; alphabetic list)
 - www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/factsheets/factsobj.html** (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services; subject list)
 - www.cosmeticsinfo.org** (Cosmetic Industry Category Ingredient Database)
 - www.whatsinsidescjohanson.com** (information on all S.C. Johnson product ingredients)

If you have any future contact dermatitis concerns or questions, please call the doctor's office.