

Final SCCS Opinion on Parabens

Background information on parabens

Parabens are a class of substances used as preservatives in a number of consumer products, including cosmetics. Preservatives are necessary to prevent product deterioration and thus play an essential role in ensuring the quality of cosmetic products and the safety of the consumers who use them in their daily lives. Parabens combine the necessary preservative function with a high skin compatibility and are thus widely used in cosmetic products. They are officially approved as preservatives for cosmetics by the European Commission and other authorities.

Statement

- After a public consultation on its draft Opinion in December 2010, the European Commission's Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) has completed its review of the safety of parabens in cosmetic products and published its final Opinion of March 22, 2011.
- The SCCS confirmed the industry assessment on the safety of methyl- and ethyl paraben at current use levels but, in the absence of further data, the SCCS proposes a reduction of currently allowed maximum levels for propyl- and butyl paraben from 0.4% to 0.2%.
- Colipa welcomes the opinion as a good basis for risk management decisions, which benefit consumer health in the EU.
- The use levels recommended by the SCCS reflect to a great extent current use practice on the EU market.
- Colipa will collaborate with the European Commission regarding the implementation of this opinion in order to ensure compliance of products on the EU market within an appropriate timeframe and as early as possible.

- The cosmetic industry will share any new or updated safety information on parabens with the SCCS and other regulatory committees, as it becomes available.
- Safety remains the number one priority of the cosmetics industry, as is shown by the long standing safety record of EU cosmetic products. Consumers can continue to have confidence in modern cosmetic products and enjoy the benefits that these bring to their well-being.

END