


(nanomaterials)

DOES IT CONTAIN NANOMATERIALS? –
CHECK THE LABEL! CONSUMERS BUYING
BODYCARE AND BEAUTY PRODUCTS IN THE
EU CAN CHECK THE INGREDIENTS. AN EU
PLATFORM PROVIDES INFORMATION
ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF USING
NANOMATERIALS.



Thick, goopy sun cream, runny shampoo or clumpy mascara are not much fun. This is why manufacturers try to optimise their formulas, with the use of nanomaterials being an option in this respect. As the nano-sized substances can have completely different and new properties than their larger equivalents, nanomaterials undergo a separate assessment to ensure they do not pose any health risks.

RISK ASSESSMENT OF TINY THINGS

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has been researching nanomaterials for years to better assess the associated health risks

and to reinforce risk communication. Products containing easily released or unbound nanomaterials are given particular attention in a risk assessment. As many different product types contain nanomaterials, i.e. not only cosmetics, practically all exposure routes are relevant to an assessment. Exposure via the skin (dermal) is of key significance for cosmetics. Other exposure routes should also be considered for certain products, for example exposure via the airways (inhalation) when it comes to some spray products, or exposure via the digestive tract (oral) for toothpaste. Due to their small size, it is easier for the tiny nanomaterials to pass some of the body's barriers such as the intestinal wall or the alveoli in the lungs. Their distribution in the body can also differ from non-nanomaterials. Correctly estimating the intake amount in the body is one of the challenges faced in risk assessment. According to current scientific knowledge, healthy skin is a very good barrier.



While the BfR is not aware of any nanomaterial contained in cosmetics that enters the body in this way, unintentional but foreseeable exposure via other exposure routes must be taken into account in cosmetics risk assessment.

EU COSMETIC PRODUCTS NOTIFICATION PORTAL

In Europe, manufacturers or those that make the product available in the EU for the first time, are responsible for the safety of bodycare and beauty products. A central reporting system for cosmetics has been introduced to ensure the population is protected. This helps the authorities with market monitoring and thus consumer protection. Dyes, preservatives and UV filters must be both registered with and approved by the European Commission before their use in cosmetics. All nano-sized ingredients must also be reported to the European Commission six months before they enter the market. Should the commission have any concerns regarding their use, the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety is tasked with a health risk assessment. As there are different nanomaterials and new ones are always being developed, every single one is checked and considered for individual use.

All nanomaterials registered in the EU and their use in products is listed on the EUON platform of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). The page offers an overview of the diverse uses of nanomaterials, not only in cosmetics. A glance at the packaging of bodycare and beauty products helps consumers to decide for themselves whether or not to use nanomaterial-based cosmetics. Nanomaterial ingredients must be labelled with the word “nano” in brackets in the EU. —

More information



BfR information
“Health assessment of Nanomaterials”



Online platform for registered chemicals and their use
“European Union Observatory for Nanomaterials”

WHAT PRODUCTS CONTAIN NANOMATERIALS AND WHY?

Nanoparticles or crystals have different functions



FACE MASKS: IMPROVED ABSORBENCY AND GEL-LIKE TEXTURE | **NAIL VARNISH:** OPAQUE, FULL COVERAGE COLOURS | **EYESHADOW:** MATTE FINISH | **MAKE-UP:** COLOUR AND ANTI-CLUMP PRODUCT FOR EVEN COVERAGE | **SKIN PRIMER:** COLOUR, UV FILTER, VITAMIN E CARRIER AND MOISTURE PROVIDER | **MASCARA:** COLOUR | **LIPSTICK:** COLOUR, SMOOTHER AND MORE EVEN APPLICATION | **LIP CARE:** SUN PROTECTION | **SUNTAN LOTION:** TRANSPARENT SUN PROTECTION | **SHAVING FOAM:** LUBRICANT AND MOISTURISER | **HAIR CONDITIONER:** SLIPPERINESS FOR COMBING | **SHAMPOO:** EASY APPLICATION, ANTI-DANDRUFF | **SHOWER GEL:** COLOUR | **HAIR GEL:** COLOUR, BETTER HOLD | **DEODORANTS:** SMOOTH GLIDE AND SWEAT ABSORPTION | **MOUTHWASH:** REMINERALISATION OF TOOTH ENAMEL | **TOOTHPASTE:** EROSION PROTECTION FOR TOOTH ENAMEL

More information



ECHA campaign on use and purpose of (nanomaterials) in cosmetics
#NanosINCosmeticsEU