BALSAM OF PERU

Your T.R.U.E. TEST results indicate that you have a contact allergy to balsam of Peru. This contact allergy may cause your skin to react when it is exposed to this substance, although it may take several days for the symptoms to appear. Typical symptoms include redness, swelling, itching and fluid-filled blisters.

Balsam of Peru is a fragrant resinous liquid harvested from trees grown in Central America. Not commonly used today, balsam of Peru may still be found as a fragrance, flavor, or antibacterial ingredient. Balsam of Peru contains a mixture of many substances related to cinnamon, vanilla and clove fragrances, and flavorings.

A positive patch test to balsam of Peru often indicates fragrance allergy.

WHERE IS BALSAM OF PERU FOUND?

At work, you may find balsam of Peru or one of its components used to add flavor or fragrance in the manufacture of:

- Herbal and botanical products
- Cleaning products
- Dental medicaments and cements
- Pesticides
- Scented candles
- Perfumes and colognes
- Scented tobacco
- Some foods and spices
- Essential oils & aromatherapy products
- Air fresheners and deodorizers

At home, you may find balsam of Peru or one of its components in:

- Perfumes and colognes
- Cosmetics
- Insect repellents
- Medicinal creams and ointments
- Oral and lip medications
- Tomatoes, citrus
- Chocolates
- Chewed gums
- Flavored tobacco
- Scented candles

Balsam of Peru may be found in veterinary preparations.

HOW CAN YOU AVOID BALSAM OF PERU?

- Only use products that do not list balsam of Peru or related chemicals on the label, ingredient list or Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).
- Choose fragrance-free personal care products and cosmetics. Avoid “unscented” products because they contain a masking fragrance related to balsam of Peru.
- Be especially careful with diaper products and hemorrhoid treatments.
- Tell your physician, pharmacist, dentist, veterinarian, beautician, and hairdresser that you are allergic to balsam of Peru. Ask for preparations that do not contain balsam of Peru or related substances.
- If your symptoms are severe, your doctor may recommend a special diet to reduce your exposure to foods that may contain balsam of Peru in flavors and spices.
- Wear protective gloves. Gloves made of natural or synthetic rubber or vinyl are good for working with products that contain balsam of Peru – provided the gloves have no added flavors.

WHAT SHOULD YOU LOOK FOR AND AVOID?*

Avoid products with the following names in the list of ingredients, MSDS, or package insert:

- Balsam of Peru or Myroxylon pereirae oleoresin; Peruvian balsam; balsam oil or extract; balsam fir oleoresin or oil; hyperabsolutes balsam, Peru; cinnamal, balsam of Tolu, China oil, black balsam, Surinam balsam, Indian balsam, Honduras balsam
- Cinnamal or cinnamyl cinnamate or styracin; eugenol or allylguaiacol; benzyl cinnamate or cinnamein; methyl cinnamate or methyl cinnamic acid; 3-phenyl-2-propenyl alcohol; 3-phenyl-2-propenal; 3-phenylacrylic acid
- Propolis balsam
- Tincture of Krameria
- Benzyl benzoate and other benzoates
- Benzoic acid
- Benzaldehyde
- Benzyl salicylate
- Cinnamic aldehyde
- Citrus peel
- Coniferyl alcohols
- Coumarin
- Farnesol
- Isoeugenol
- Nerolidol
- Resinous substances
- Tea Tree Oil
- Phenyl-4-hydroxybutanoic acid
- Aroma extracts with the following: benzyl benzoate, benzyl salicylate, benzyl acetate, salicylic acid, hydrogenated castor oil, coumarin, dithio carbamic acid, hydroxyacetophenone, hydroxyacetophenone, eugenol, hydroxybenzophenone, cinnamic aldehyde, benzyl benzoate, squalane, linalool, linalyl acetate, citronellal, citral, linalool, linalyl acetate
- Fragrance mix components
- Gum benzoin
- Colophony
- Tincture of krameria
- Balsam of Tolu
- Storax (Styrax)
- Wood tars
- Coumarin

*These lists are brief and provide just a few examples. Read product labels carefully and talk to your doctor if you have any questions. Product formulations may change from time to time without notice. Talk to your doctor for specific instructions. For additional information about products that might contain balsam of Peru or a related substance, go to the Household Products Database online (householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov) at the United States National Library of Medicine.

Visit truetest.com for more information about contact allergies and patch testing.