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Cosmetics

Also called: Makeup

Cosmetics are products you apply to your body to clean it, make it more attractive, or change the way it looks. They include:

- Hair dyes
- Makeup
- Perfumes
- Skin-care creams

Cosmetics that treat or prevent diseases are also drugs. Products such as dandruff shampoo, fluoride toothpaste, and antiperspirant deodorant are both cosmetics and drugs. A good way to tell if you're buying a cosmetic that is also a drug is to see if the first ingredient listed is an "active ingredient." The active ingredient is the chemical that makes the product effective. The manufacturer must have proof that it's safe for its intended use.

Cosmetics can cause [allergic reactions](#) [https://medlineplus.gov/allergy.html]. The first sign is often red and irritated skin. Fragrances and preservatives are the most common causes of skin problems.

To find out all the ingredients in a cosmetic you use, check the container. Manufacturers are required to list them. Labels such as "natural" and "hypoallergenic" have no official meaning. Companies can use them to mean whatever they want.

Food and Drug Administration

Start Here

- Cosmetics and Your Health [<https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/cosmetics>]  (National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences)
- Is It a Cosmetic, a Drug, or Both? (or Is It Soap?) [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetics-laws-regulations/it-cosmetic-drug-or-both-or-it-soap>] (Food and Drug Administration)

Related Issues

- Choosing the Best Skin Care Products [<https://www.asds.net/skin-experts/skin-care/choosing-the-best-skin-care-products>] (American Society for Dermatologic Surgery)
- Colored and Decorative Contact Lenses: A Prescription Is a Must [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/colored-and-decorative-contact-lenses-prescription-must>] (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/se-necesita-una-receta-medica-para-adquirir-lentes-de-contacto-cosmeticos-y-de-colores>]
- Cosmetics Safety Q&A: Shelf Life [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/resources-consumers-cosmetics/cosmetics-safety-q-a-shelf-life>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Eye Cosmetic Safety [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetic-products/eye-cosmetic-safety>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Hair Dyes, Other Hair Products, and Cancer Risk [<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/substances/hair-dyes-fact-sheet>]  (National Cancer Institute)

Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/cancer/causas-prevencion/riesgo/sustancias/hoja-informativa-tintes-para-cabello>]

- Is It Really FDA Approved? [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/it-really-fda-approved>] (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/esta-realmente-aprobado-por-la-fda>]
- Probing Personal Care Products: Look Out for Harmful Ingredients [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2022/08/probing-personal-care-products>]  (National Institutes of Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/sondeo-de-productos-de-cuidado-personal>]

Specifics

- Allergens in Cosmetics [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetic-ingredients/allergens-cosmetics>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Formaldehyde in Hair Smoothing Products: What You Should Know [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/formaldehyde-hair-smoothing-products-what-you-should-know>] (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/el-formaldehido-en-productos-para-suavizar-el-cabello-lo-que-debe-saber>]
- Fragrances in Cosmetics [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetic-ingredients/fragrances-cosmetics>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Hair Dye and Hair Relaxers [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/free-publications-women/hair-dye-and-hair-relaxers>] **Easy-to-Read** (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/free-publications-women/tintes-y-cremas-alisadoras-para-el-cabello-hair-dye-and-relaxers>]
- How Safe Are Color Additives? [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/how-safe-are-color-additives>] (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/que-tan-seguros-son-los-colorantes>]
- Kohl, Kajal, Al-Kahal, Surma, Tiro, Tozali or Kwalli: By Any Name, Beware of Lead Poisoning [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetic-products/kohl-kajal-al-kahal-surma-tiro-tozali-or-kwalli-any-name-beware-lead-poisoning>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Lipstick and Lead: Questions and Answers [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetic-products/limiting-lead-lipstick-and-other-cosmetics>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Mercury Poisoning Linked to Skin Products [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/mercury-poisoning-linked-skin-products>] (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/intoxicacion-por-mercurio-vinculada-productos-para-la-piel>]
- Nail Care Products [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetic-products/nail-care-products>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Novelty Makeup [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetic-products/novelty-makeup>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Talc [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetic-ingredients/talc>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Tattoos and Permanent Make-Up [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/womens-health-topics/tattoos-and-permanent-make-up>] **Easy-to-Read** (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/free-publications-women/tatuajes-y-maquillaje-permanente-tattoos-and-permanent-makeup>]

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Structural and Functional Profiling of Water-Extracted Polypeptides from Periplaneta americana: A... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40733168>]
- Article: Macroalgae-Inspired Brominated Chalcones as Cosmetic Ingredients with the Potential to Target... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40710503>]
- Article: Evaluating reporting trends and adverse effects of cosmetic products in Saudi... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40695878>]
- Cosmetics -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Cosmetics%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1>]

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ent%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+]

Find an Expert

- American Academy of Dermatology [<https://www.aad.org/?NoAds>]
- Food and Drug Administration [<https://www.fda.gov/>]

Women

- Cosmetics and Pregnancy [<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/resources-consumers-cosmetics/cosmetics-pregnancy>]
(Food and Drug Administration)
- Using Hair Dyes and Color during Pregnancy [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/hair-color-pregnancy.html>]
(Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/hair-color-pregnancy.html>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Bubble bath soap poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002762.htm>]

Cold wave lotion poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002693.htm>]

Cologne poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002694.htm>]

Contact dermatitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000869.htm>]

Cuticle remover poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002695.htm>]

Deodorant poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002696.htm>]

Face powder poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002700.htm>]

Hair bleach poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002702.htm>]

Hair dye poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002703.htm>]

Hair spray poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002705.htm>]

Hair straightener poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002706.htm>]

Hair tonic poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002707.htm>]

Hand lotion poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002708.htm>]

Lip moisturizer poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002723.htm>]

Mouthwash overdose [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002666.htm>]

Nail polish poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002722.htm>]

Shampoo - swallowing [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002737.htm>]

Shaving cream poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002717.htm>]

Swallowing soap [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002739.htm>]

Toothpaste overdose [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002745.htm>]

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