

Ingredients - objective information appreciated

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There is in-depth coverage on spectacular active agents in cosmetics. By contrast, base substances and additives are rather found in small print, though they give detailed information on tolerance and long-term effects of the product.

It depends on the particular perspective how ingredients of cosmetic products are evaluated. The field of natural cosmetics for instance has other standards than the dermatological cosmetics. If objective sources are not at hand it is difficult to understand the different perspective of argumentation. With regard to the benefits for the skin those substances or products should finally be chosen which, according to the latest developments in cosmetic technology show the best results regarding the broad spectrum of efficacy while also taking into account their side effects.

Just to mention two examples: the ayurveda system traditionally uses sesame oil as base oil for fragrance oils. Today, we know that neutral oils like jojoba oil e.g. are more suitable as sesame oil contains a substance with phenol-like (cross-reactive) allergy potential.

Natural or synthetic

The field of natural cosmetics also consequently avoids chemical preservatives and alternatively sometimes uses rosewater, essential oils and specific extracts. The chemical analysis of these ingredients however shows that the natural compounds contained may be identical with synthetic preservatives. Regarding the effects on the skin however it is of no importance whether the sensitizing potential of a paraben is of natural or synthetic origin.

For objective information with regard to the physiology of the skin it is important to refer to sources which describe specific raw materials or compounds like oils and extracts with the prospect of their physical, chemical and physiological properties. Product information and books on products edited by manufacturing companies are less appropriate in this case. The reference works and books quoted partly are quite expensive however they can be found in municipal, regional and university libraries or also in specialized book stores.

One of the most popular books is the **Römpp Chemie-Lexikon**, which consists of several

volumes and provides broad information. Although it is primarily focussed on the chemical field it is written in an understandable style and contains a multitude of recommendations for further reading as well as references on specific substances and their properties. Less known but nevertheless excellently focussed on dermatological and cosmetic perspectives is the "**Lexikon der Hilfsstoffe für Pharmazie, Kosmetik und angrenzende Gebiete**" by H. P. Fiedler. This dictionary comprises several volumes and contains the ingredients together with the relevant toxicological, dermatological and chemical data, INCI terminology and references to source literature.

Though not a dictionary, the multi-volume edition "**Die kosmetischen Präparate**" by G. A. Nowak und A. Domsch is very informative regarding specific substances and substance groups. Besides the topics development, manufacturing, ingredients, and application of cosmetics the edition contains a multitude of typical prescriptions of cosmetics and excellently explains the composition and function of the different substances. Also the "**Wörterbuch der Kosmetik**" by H. Frey and I. Otte which was reprinted in August 2003 should be mentioned in this connection.

Reference works are regularly updated with the latest scientific findings. However they require a basic knowledge which is recommended to acquire step by step.

Associations and institutions

The **Industrieverband Körperpflege und Waschmittel**, which means the Confederation of Industries for Body Care and Detergents (IKW, 60329 Frankfurt am Main, Karlstraße 21) provides its members with excellent and detailed information as e.g. "Kosmetika – Inhaltsstoffe – Funktionen" which is an INCI list containing the function of the different substances and the Latin plant denominations. Besides different other brochures this list is available free of charge via www.ikw.org. In case the reader is interested in details on base substances he is recommended to refer to the

booklet "Körperpflege in Chemie- und Biologieunterricht" which belongs to the teaching materials and is available from Klett-Verlag (www.klett-verlag.de). Furthermore, the IKW association maintains an extensive statute book where the German Cosmetic Decree (KVO) with all its appendices also is included. The latter should be available in every beauty institute in order to be informed on the restrictions regarding the different substances.

The German Cosmetic Decree (KVO) is available free of charge at the Bundesministerium für Verbraucherschutz, Ernährung und Landwirtschaft (Federal Ministry for Consumer Protection, Nutrition and Agriculture) and may be ordered free of charge via internet: www.verbraucherministerium.de. Regarding problem substances and own health aspects it should be referred to the extensive list on hazardous materials of the **Berufsgenossenschaftliches Institut für Arbeitsschutz (BIA) (Professional Association for Industrial Safety)** which is available free of charge. It can be downloaded also free of charge from the webpage www.hvbg.de using the keyword Gefahrstoffliste (list of hazardous substances). The BIA also provides the so-called technical regulations for industrial safety (TRGS) as for example for handling sensitizing substances and for working in humid environment where cosmetic treatments also belong to.

Reading tips

There is a variety of books with information on substances from different fields. The paperback "**Kosmetik - Entwicklung, Her-**

stellung und Anwendung kosmetischer Mittel" by W. Umbach. The paperback deals with the composition and application of cosmetic products. "Pflegekosmetik" by W. Raab und U. Kindl is also recommended for reference. For those who besides cosmetics are also interested in nutrition and food supplements the "**Lehrbuch der Lebensmittelchemie"** by Belitz und Grosch is recommended.

Further books on the subject cosmetics and related fields may be found at www.amazon.de, www.ki-online.de (see book tips with order number and www.libri.de

The sources listed above are only a small selection out of a multitude of books offered on the market. It should however be mentioned that there is not a single standard work where the overall information regarding a specific substance is compiled.

For more @ information please refer to

www.baua.de/start.htm
www.bfarm.de
www.bmggesundheit.de
www.bzga.de
www.ctfa.org
www.derminform.de
www.ifsc.org
www.ikw.org
www.tib.uni-hannover.de
www.who.ch

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