

# SCCS advises concentration limit of MI in cosmetics should be lowered



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**The European Commission has stated that the use of the preservative methylisothiazolinone (MI) in cosmetics products is safe at the right levels, but that the concentration limit should be lowered.**

The Commission's Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) released its Opinion after trade association Cosmetics Europe supplied safety data on the use of MIT in rinse-off and leave-on hair products earlier in the year, and MI has been under scrutiny following various reports.

At present, the preservative is allowed to be used in cosmetics in a concentration of up to 100 parts per million (ppm) for rinse-off products; however, [the latest SCCS Opinion](#) suggests the upper limit should be capped at 15ppm due to the its sensitising effects.

*"The information provided does not support the safe use of MI as a preservative in rinse-off cosmetic products up to a concentration limit of 100 ppm from the view of induction of contact allergy," says the Opinion.*

*“For rinse-off cosmetic products, a concentration of 15 ppm (0.0015%) MI is considered safe for the consumer from the point of view of induction of contact allergy.”*

The SCCS also says that in the case of leave-on hair cosmetic products, the information does not support the safe use of MI as a preservative up to a concentration limit of 100 ppm from the point of view of induction of contact allergy.

It is reported that high levels of exposure to MI can cause rashes and swelling in those with sensitive skin.

### **Calls for limits**

The preservative hit the headlines in Denmark earlier this year, after the [Danish Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) called for an EU-wide ban on its use in cosmetics](#) as it puts consumers at risk of suffering from an allergic reaction.

The report by the Danish EPA evaluated the concentration of MI in consumer products sold on the Danish market, and its exposure levels, finding that consumers may be exposed to concentrations that could potentially lead to allergies.

The report also said that all products containing the substance should be labelled clearly with allergy warnings; with Denmark’s Environment Minister, Kirsten Brosbøl backing the report and pushing for the EU to limit MI in consumer products.

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