
FRAGRANCE INGREDIENTS

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WHAT ARE FRAGRANCE INGREDIENTS?

Fragrances are the constituents of olfactory compositions which create the basis of the great perfumes, eau de toilette, etc. Fragrance ingredients are also used in household fragrances, to perfume cosmetic products and in consumer products such as household cleaning products.

Since ancient times, man has made use of and traded in fragrances. The role of odors in social relations and well-being is well known. Olfactory compositions underlie the odors of cosmetics and contribute to the sensory pleasure related to their use.

Fragrance ingredients include a very large series of substances of natural origin (rose, jasmine, lavender, orange, bergamot, etc.) or synthetic origin.

WHY INDICATE 'FRAGRANCE' IN THE LIST OF INGREDIENTS AND NOT THE NAMES OF THE SUBSTANCES?

The creation of olfactory compositions draws on a unique experience and perfumers jealously guard the recipes of the great perfumes on which their celebrity is based. In order to comply with the confidentiality necessary for the protection of industrial know-how, the composition of the fragrance is not indicated in detail on the labeling, with the exception of the list of allergens contained in the fragrance.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL RISKS?

Fragrances are known by the dermatological community as being liable to induce allergies in certain consumers. In 2003, the European Union instituted, in the cosmetic regulations, the obligation of indicating, in the list of ingredients, the presence of certain substances rather than the simple statement 'fragrance'. In all, 26 substances considered the most allergenic are to be stated in the product labeling if present above a certain cutoff (0.01% for rinse-off products and 0.001% for non-rinse-off products). The consumer, who is thus better informed, is able to ensure the rational use of the cosmetic product. The European Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety recently reviewed all the scientific data on allergies related to fragrance ingredients in cosmetic products and recommended extending the list beyond the 26 substances that currently have to be stated in the labeling. The European Commission is working in close cooperation with industry to define the optimum manner of incorporating the expert opinion in new labeling provisions.

WHY ARE L'ORÉAL PRODUCTS SAFE?

In our research teams, certain staff are specifically responsible for assessing the safety of fragrance ingredients. The olfactory compositions that we purchase comply with the standards of the IFRA, the international organization representing the producers of olfactory compositions, and undergo an initial safety assessment by the supplier. In addition, the compositions are required to comply with very strict in-house specifications to which the safety assessor contributes. After having checked that the composition fulfills the regulatory obligations and safety requirements, we conduct clinical tests in order to confirm the safety of the product containing the fragrance composition. The dual assessment by both the supplier and L'Oréal ensures that our products can be used in all safety.

L'ORÉAL