

10 Balsam of Peru – Patient Information

Your T.R.U.E. TEST results indicate that you have a contact allergy to balsam of Peru. Balsam of Peru in contact with your skin may result in dermatitis. 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 that are generally 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
- Perfumes and colognes
- Cleaning products
- Scented tobaccos
- Dental medicaments and cements
- Some foods and spices
- Pesticides
- Essential oils and aromatherapy products
- Scented candles
- Air fresheners and deodorizers



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

- Perfumes and colognes
- Baby powders
- Cosmetics
- Sunscreens, suntan lotions
- Insect repellents
- Hair conditioners and shampoos
- Medicinal creams and ointments
- Medicated lozenges
- Oral and lip medications
- Pesticides
- Tomatoes, citrus
- Air fresheners and deodorizers
- Chocolate
- Colas, sodas and flavored beverages
- Chewing gum
- Wines, liquors and aperitifs
- Flavored tobaccos
- Cinnamon, vanilla and other spices
- Scented candles
- Essential oils and aromatherapy products

Balsam of Peru may be found in veterinary preparations.

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How can you avoid balsam of Peru?

- Only use products that do not list balsam of Peru or related chemicals on the label, ingredients list or Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).
- Choose fragrance-free personal care products and cosmetics. Avoid “unscented” products since these may 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. This diet tries to reduce the 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 they have no added flavors.
- If you think that you contact balsam of Peru at work, ask your employer for MSDS or manufacturer information on the product(s). Talk to your employer about using a different product or wearing protective gloves and clothing.

What should you look for and avoid?*

Avoid products that list any of the following names in the ingredients, MSDS or package insert.

- **Balsam of Peru** or myroxylon pereirae oleoresin; Peruvian balsam; balsam Peru oil or extract; balsam fir oleoresin or oil; hyperabsolute balsam, Peru; cinnamoin, balsam of Tolu, China oil, Black balsam, Surinam balsam, Indian balsam, Honduras balsam

Balsam of Peru may contain:

- Cinnamic or cinnamylic acid; 3-phenyl-2-propenoic acid; 3-phenylacrylic acid
- Cinnamal or cinnamic aldehyde; cassia aldehyde; 3-phenyl-2-propenal
- Cinnamic or cinnamyl alcohol; 3-phenyl-2-propenol; 3-phenylallyl alcohol
- Methyl cinnamate or methyl cinnamylate; cinnamic acid methyl ester; methyl 3-phenylpropenoate
- Benzyl cinnamate or cinnamoin; cinnamic acid benzyl ester; phenylmethyl 3-phenyl-2-propenoate
- Vanillin or vanillic aldehyde; vanillaldehyde; 2-methoxy-4-formylphenol
- Eugenol or allylguaiacol; 2-methoxy-4-(2-propenyl)phenol; 2-methoxy-4-allylphenol
- Cinnamyl cinnamate or styracin; 3-phenylallyl cinnamate
- Benzoic alcohol
- Benzyl benzoate and other benzoates
- Benzyl acetate
- Benzoic acid
- Benzaldehyde
- Benzyl salicylate
- Cinnamic aldehyde
- Citrus peel
- Coniferyl alcohols
- Coumarin
- Farnesol
- Isoeugenol
- Nerolidol
- Resinous substances
- Tea Tree Oil

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You may also react to balsam of Peru -related substances such as:

- Fragrance mix components
- Gum benzoin
- Propolis balsam
- Colophony
- Spices (e.g. Jamaican pepper, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, paprika, curry, vanilla)
- Tincture of krameria
- Balsam of Copaiba
- Storax (Styrax)
- Essence of orange peel
- Balsam of Tolu
- Turpentine
- Wood tars
- Beeswax
- Coumarin
- Diethylstilbestrol

What are some products that may contain balsam of Peru or one of its components?*

- Tiger Balm® Extra Strength Pain Relieving Ointment
- Spectracide® Bag-A-Bug® Japanese Beetle Trap
- Hoffman Dog & Cat Repellent
- Bug-A-Tak Insect Spray
- Ecco Bella® Vanilla Shampoo/Conditioner
- Nature'sWay® Zinc Lozenges with Echinacea and vitamin C
- Ortho® Bug-B-Gon® Full-Season Japanese Beetle Trap
- Benzoin® compound tincture
- Djarum® cigarettes
- The Body Shop® Vanilla Body Lotion

What products do NOT contain balsam of Peru or one of its components?*

- Nature's Resource® Zinc & Echinacea Lozenges
- Repel® Dog & Cat Repellent Spray
- Magick Fragrance Free Oil Free Shampoo
- Lubrex® Hand Cream
- Carbaryl (Sevin) or trichlorfon (Dylox, Proxol) for Japanese beetle control
- DHS™ Clear Shampoo, Fragrance Free
- Icy Hot® Extra Strength Pain Relieving Balm
- Lubriderm® Daily Moisture Lotion, Fragrance Free

*For additional information about products that might contain balsam of peru or a related substance, go to the Household Product Database online (<http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov>) at the United States National Library of Medicine. These lists are brief and provide just a few examples. They are not comprehensive. Product formulations also change frequently. Read product labels carefully and talk to your doctor if you have questions. These are general guidelines. Talk to your doctor for more specific instructions.



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For further information about contact allergies and patch testing, visit www.truetest.com.