

## Cosmetic Reactions

### *What is Cosmetic Allergic/Irritant Contact Dermatitis?*

An allergic/irritant reaction occurring on the skin due to an offending cosmetic agent.

### *What causes Cosmetic Allergic/Irritant Contact Dermatitis?*

Common cosmetic causes of ACD include fragrances, preservatives, emulsifiers, lanolin, skin care products, makeup, and hair products, hair coloring, nail care products, sunscreens, toothpastes, mouthwashes, personal cleansing products, shaving preparations, depilatories, epilating waxes, and bath oils/salts.

### *How can one discover which cosmetic product is the offending agent?*

In up to 70-80% of cases, the exact offending agent is not identified. However with careful reflection, one may identify offending products by recalling when and if they have used any new products, had new procedures performed including hair dye (para phenylenediamine), and various nail products, if the ingredients/formula of products that have been used for years have recently changed, or if the cosmetics have aged etc. Discontinuing the use of all suspicious cosmetic products, followed by adding one product at a time back to your cosmetic routine every two weeks, may reveal which product is the offending agent, because most products will cause a skin reaction within a two week period.

### *How is Cosmetic Allergic/Irritant Contact Dermatitis treated?*

Avoiding any known or suspected offending agent is key. Avoiding fragrances, or other non-essential chemicals often added to products may be helpful. It is also recommended that all old cosmetic products be thrown out, as the ingredients/formulas may alter with age. Over the counter cortisone creams may be beneficial for itchy symptoms, and your dermatologist may prescribe a stronger steroid medication for your symptoms if needed.

If you have any further questions please call the Dermatology Clinic of Idaho at (208) 939-4599 or (208) 376-4776