

## Cosmetics: Precautions

Could your cosmetics be making you sick?

Caution needs to be used with when deciding whether to use any type of cosmetic, cream, or beauty product on your skin. Most women never think of the possible allergic reactions and aging problems that might occur when using these products on their faces and bodies.

To help alleviate consumers' concerns, many products use the term "hypoallergenic" on their packages. They market these products to you as if there is no need to worry about skin problems just because it is hypoallergenic. The truth is that there is no standardized test or method that can back up a claim like this.

Also be wary of products that state "Dermatologist Approved" or "Allergy Tested." These marketing labels do not offer any guarantee that your skin will not have adverse reactions from those cosmetics. And of course, the word "natural" is another great way to pull the consumer into a mindset of false safety.

Below are some helpful guidelines for safe cosmetic use:

1. Always wash your hands and face before applying cosmetics.
2. Eye cosmetics should be thrown away after 6 months.
3. Mascara should be thrown away after 3 months.
4. Do not use the open samples of cosmetics when you visit the store. One survey found that almost 6% of these samples were infected with contaminants like fungus.
5. Any makeup that smells funny or has lost its regular consistency should be thrown away.
6. If you discover that you have an eye infection, do not use makeup. Also, throw away all makeup that you used prior the infection as these may be contaminated as well.

Use common sense when it comes to using cosmetics. Throw away old cosmetics. Don't assume that a product is safe just because the label says it is. And never share cosmetics with another person.