

CONTACT DERMATITIS AND OCCUPATIONAL DERMATOSES

ALLERGIC CONTACT DERMATITIS TO PROPYL GALLATE

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Background: The gallates are antioxidants used as preservatives in cosmetics, topical drugs (corticosteroids and depigmenting) and fatty foods. Of the gallic acid esters, the name of the gallates refers to three substances: octyl, dodecyl and propyl gallate; whose sensitizing power is related to the chain length of carbon atoms, being the highest to octyl gallate, however, there have been more report cases associated with propyl gallate because it is the most commonly used. The number of allergic contact dermatitis secondary to gallates is increasing, this could be due to a change in the use of these preservatives (more in cosmetics than in food), which leads to a reduction in immune tolerance.

The main topography affected in order of frequency are: lips, face and hands; this is because the gallates are used as preservatives in lipsticks and personal care products

Observation: A 65-year-old woman presented a 6-year history of recalcitrant eyelid dermatitis with intense itching, a previous diagnosis of dermatomyositis and multiple treatments that included emollients, topical and systemic corticosteroids. She presented erythema, edema, eczema and fine scales that affected the eyelids, malar regions, upper cutaneous lip and the dorsal region of the third finger of the right hand. The patch test was performed with cosmetic series, balsam of Peru, fragrances mix I and II, with positivity ++ in first and second readings to propyl gallate. We gave her information about the allergen and treatment with prednicarbate in the inflammatory skin and olive oil as emollient. The patient had a good evolution with some relapse after contact with the allergen, including one after she ate margarine.

Key message: test gallates is important in patients with hand or face dermatitis, specially with cheilitis, in whom allergic contact dermatitis is suspect related to cosmetics.