

Allergy to Potassium Dichromate or Chromate

What am I allergic to?

You have been found to be allergic to **Potassium Dichromate or Chromate**.

What is Potassium Dichromate or Chromate?

Potassium Dichromate or Chromate is a common inorganic chemical reagent, most commonly used as an oxidising agent in various laboratory and industrial applications.

What must I avoid?

Potassium Dichromate or Chromate is most commonly found in cement and leather, although it is also used in chemicals used to etch/clean glass, photography and photographic screen printing, and as a homeopathic remedy (in which it is also called Kali bichromicum or Kalium bichromicum). It is also used in industry to galvanise sheet metal and protect metals in general.

If you have hand dermatitis you must avoid cement and leather gloves. If you have foot dermatitis you must avoid shoes made of leather, instead buying vegetable-tanned or plastic shoes.

Where can Potassium Dichromate or Chromate be found?

Sources include (but are not limited to):

- Cement and foundries (added to sand for bricks)
- Builders filling materials
- Tanned leather (shoes and gloves)
- Textiles (printing and dyeing; military green – trivalent chromium is used as fixation)
- Wood preservatives
- Corrosion protective in antifreeze, oils and paints
- Alloys
- Electroplating and welding (galvanizing solutions and welding fumes)
- Car and aircraft industries
- Colour TV tube manufacture
- Engraving, lithography, ceramics, pottery glazes and lacquer
- Photocopying paper and blueprints, printing inks, crayons, ballpoint pen ink
- Cosmetics (chromium oxide pigment in eye shadow and mascara)
- Tattoos
- Colour developers for photography
- Milk testing preservatives
- Yellow, orange and green anti-rust primer paints
- Match heads, ignition mixtures, explosive manufacture
- Detergents, bleaches, waxes and polishes including shoe polish
- Glues, adhesives, epoxy resin
- Chromic suture material (eg catgut, metal to polyethylene hip joints)
- Chrome plated objects (eg screws, nuts, disks, musical instrument strings)

Avoidance of chromate, if necessary by changing jobs, will be helpful but may not clear your dermatitis. The reasons why it may persist in the absence of chromate are uncertain, but it is more likely in severe and chronic cases.

Dermatology

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