

7 Colophony – Patient Information

Your T.R.U.E. TEST results indicate that you have a contact allergy to colophony. 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.

Colophony comes from the sap of coniferous trees such as pines, junipers, firs and cedars. Colophony (or rosin) is found in personal care and beauty products, topical medications, surface coatings, lubricants, adhesives and sealants, as well as the rosin for string instruments and dancers' shoes.

Where Is Colophony Found?



At work, you may find colophony in:

- Wood and sawdust
- Wood fillers
- Coated papers
- Printing inks
- Cutting fluids
- Lacquers and varnishes
- Paints and stains
- Polishes and waxes
- Asphalt products
- Corrosion inhibitors
- Greases and oils
- Solvents
- Polyethylene
- Neoprene rubber
- Waterproofings
- Soldering materials
- Linoleum
- Drive belts



At home, you may find colophony in:

- Instrument rosin
- Diapers, feminine napkins
- Waxed threads
- Wax depilatories
- Furniture polishes and waxes
- Pine-oil cleaners
- Yellow laundry bar soap
- Glues, adhesives, tapes, stamps

Other possible sources include dental-impression materials, ostomy appliances, wound dressings and salicylic acid plasters. Some veterinary medications may contain colophony, such as topical salves, hoof ointments and softeners, and first-aid ointments.

How can you avoid colophony?*

- Only use products that do not list colophony or related chemicals on the label, ingredients list or Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). If there is no information, contact the product manufacturer to see if it contains colophony.
- Avoid contact with sawdust and sap from pine trees and other coniferous trees.
- Tell your physician, pharmacist, dentist, veterinarian, beautician and hairdresser that you are allergic to colophony. Ask for preparations that do not contain colophony or related substances.
- Wear protective gloves. Heavy-duty gloves made of vinyl or synthetic rubber are good for temporary work with veterinary medications, pine-oil cleaners, varnishes or paints. Use cotton gloves to protect your hands from paper products that contain or are coated with colophony.
- If you think that you contact colophony at work, ask your employer for MSDS or manufacturer information on the product(s). Talk to your employer about using a product without colophony or wearing protective gloves and clothing.

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What should you look for and avoid?*

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

- Colophony
- Disproportionated rosin
- Wood or pine rosin
- Abietic alcohol, abietyl alcohol or methyl abietate alcohol
- Colophonium
- Tall oil
- Rosin, gum rosin or rosin gum
- Abietic acid

Colophony-related substances that you may also react to:

- Wood tars
- Fragrances, essential oils and some spices
- Rosin esters

What are some products that may contain colophony?*

- Kester® 60/40 Resin Core Solder
- Elmers® Probond Woodfiller
- Rawleigh Antiseptic Salve
- Permatex® Pipe Joint Compound
- Indian Head® Gasket Shellac Compound
- Hill Brand Rosin for Violin, Viola & Cello

What are some similar products that do NOT contain colophony?*

- Kester® 50/50 Acid Core Solder
- The Right Stuff® Gasket Maker
- Vermont's Original Bag Balm
- Loctite® H.V.A.C. Blue Pipe Joint Compound
- DAP® Plastic Wood Solvent Wood Filler
- Clarity® Rosin for Violin, Viola, Cello or Bass

*For additional information about products that might contain colophony 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 are general guidelines. Talk to your doctor for more specific instructions. These lists or products 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.