

Phthalates and cosmetics

Athanasia Varvaresou¹, Kriton Iakovou², Spyridon Papageorgiou¹, Evangelia Protopapa¹ and Fotini Mellou¹

¹*Technological Educational Institution of Athens, Greece*

²*Ministry of Health, Greece*

Abstract

Phthalic acid esters or phthalates are widely used by cosmetic industry to fix or hold color or fragrance, making the color or fragrance last longer and to provide a film or gloss. Secondly phthalates are used as plasticizers to impart flexibility to rigid polymers such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC), that are used for packaging of the final cosmetic products or even the raw materials. Although some phthalates as di-n-butyl (DBP), benzylbutyl (BBP) di-(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (DEHP) are banned under the cosmetics directive as CMR substances (carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic for reproduction), other like diethyl phthalate (DEP) and dimethyl phthalate (DMP) are not banned in Europe but they are defined as contaminants to be controlled by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) together with di-n-octyl phthalate (DINP). Most perfumes contain DEP which is a well established perfume fixative and DMP a substance which is not used as cosmetic ingredient according to COLIPA. In this short study, we try to pause the questions regarding the safety of the usage of some phthalates in cosmetic and especially perfume industry, since perfumes are leave on cosmetics and there is a high potential of human exposure.

Biography

Athanasia Varvaresou is an Associate Professor in department of Cosmetology at Technological Educational Institution of Athens, Greece.