

NA13: Benzocaine

CAS#: 94-09-7

Patient Information

Your patch test result indicates that you have a contact allergy to benzocaine. 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.

Where is benzocaine found?

Benzocaine is a topical anesthetic frequently used in cold medicine, cough syrups, throat and mouth medicines, hemorrhoid medicine, sunburn ointments, pain-relieving ointments, anti-itch ointments, wound ointments and powders. It is a common sensitizer and may cause photosensitization in some people.

How can you avoid contact with benzocaine?

Avoid products that list any of the following names in the ingredients:

- Benzocaine
- 4-carbethoxyaniline
- ethyl PABA
- benzoic acid, 4-amino-,ethyl ester
- ethyl 4-aminobenzoate

What are some products that may contain benzocaine?

- After Sun Care
- Cold Medicine
- Cough Syrups
- Itch Relief Products
- Oral and Nasal Sore Medications
- Pain Relief Sprays, Ointments and Gels
- Pet Care
- Throat Lozenges and Sprays
- Vaginal and Perianal Care

Patients allergic to benzocaine may also experience reactions to other ester type anesthetics and unless shown not to be allergic to other ester anesthetics, they should be avoided. You may cross-react to para-phenylenediamine in hair dye, PABA and related compounds in sunscreens, topical sulfonamides, and azo dyes in clothing.

*For additional information about products that might contain **benzocaine**, go to the Household Product Database online (householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov) at the United States National Library of Medicine. These lists 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 any questions. These are general guidelines. Talk to your doctor for more specific instructions.