

THE QUESTION OF COLORANTS

We recently received Consultant and Client requests to give more detail on how we choose, and use, colorants in our products.

To recap, a colorant is defined as either a pigment (which is not water-soluble) or a dye (which is water-soluble). Pigments and dyes may be naturally or synthetically-derived.

In the makeup category, we must use colorants to achieve the desired performance objectives of the formulas. Because colorants do not serve a functional purpose in Skin Care, Body Care, Sun Care, and Family products, we choose not to formulate with colorants in these categories.

To determine if we are comfortable formulating with a specific colorant, we first review each one from a global regulatory perspective. Of course, we go well beyond the regulatory requirements. As part of our Ingredient Selection Process we further screen each colorant for any known human health and environmental hazard endpoints, including but not limited to irritation, dermal sensitization, carcinogenicity, mutagenicity, developmental and reproductive toxicity, endocrine disruption, aquatic toxicity, and impose further restrictions as needed. We then account for exposure routes relevant to safety (e.g., dermal vs. oral exposures to the product).

When possible, we give preference to colorants that come from nature. But because many of our makeup products (Foundations, Powders, Lip Products) require richly-pigmented and long-lasting benefits, we have also identified a group of synthetic colorants that meet our desired physical attributes, ensure the stability of our product, and exceed our health hazard screening criteria. One of the reasons we use synthetic colors is that natural colorants may be carriers of toxic, heavy metals that are not required to be on the label. Additionally, the synthetic colorants we choose to formulate with have better stability, more consistent color control, and are better able to meet global regulatory guidelines for safety, purity, and heavy metal content. This is an example of a case where “natural” does not necessarily mean safer, and synthetic does not necessarily mean “toxic.”

We mark the purity of all our colorants by running our own heavy metal analysis, and testing each batch of our finished color cosmetics according to the stringent limits we consider to be the most health protective. We monitor and test our products for 17 different heavy metals.

Of the 153 cosmetic colorants allowed in the EU, and the 65 cosmetic colorants allowed in the US, Beautycounter prohibits the vast majority from being used in our products. We currently use 18 colorants in our cosmetics, 10 of which are “naturally-derived” and 8 of which are “synthetic” colorants.

Through our rigorous screening and testing process, our commitment to transparent and ethical sourcing, and our proactive involvement at every step of the manufacturing process, we are able to fulfill our promise and provide you with products that meet our standards of safety and performance.

COLORANTS FAQ

WHERE DOES BEAUTYCOUNTER USE COLORANTS?

Today, we only formulate with colorants in makeup products where color payoff (application intensity) is desired. We do not use colorants in Facial Skin Care, Body Care or Family products, as they do not serve a functional purpose.

WHAT TYPES OF COLORANTS DOES BEAUTYCOUNTER USE?

We currently formulate using a combination of both naturally-derived and synthetic pigments (not water-soluble) and dyes (water-soluble) based on the needs of each formula.

WHAT ARE LAKE PIGMENTS?

Lake colorants are insoluble pigments produced by combining a soluble dye with a metallic salt.

Lake = water soluble dye (colorant) + insoluble substrate

WHY DOES BEAUTYCOUNTER USE LAKE PIGMENTS?

1. Lake pigments are oil dispersible. They are particularly effective at imparting color in lipsticks and other oil-based products.
2. Lake pigments tend to have good stability, color control, and are able to deliver strong payoff in developing color cosmetics.
3. Lakes are able to resist “color-bleeding” (migrating from one part of a product to another), which is very important.
4. Different Lake pigments can be made by varying the dye content, which allows for formulation of more shade options.

ARE THERE SAFETY CONCERNS WITH LAKE PIGMENTS?

Historically, Lake pigments were first produced from by-products of coal processing and were therefore known as “coal tar colors.” Today, the majority of the industry has moved away from this practice, although there are still some dyes in the market that can be made from coal tar. Coal

tar is a known allergen, a potential carcinogen, and is a prohibited ingredient on The Never List®.

Beautycounter’s Lake pigments are synthetically-derived, not coal tar-derived, and are required to undergo testing for purity and safety.

Additionally, there are several studies that link synthetic colorants with potential hyperactivity, when used as food additives and directly ingested through diet. Although these studies are based on a different route of exposure and much larger amounts of pigment use, we still take this concern into consideration while formulating. Using our conservative approach, we impose further use level restrictions to only use amounts that are necessary to impart color consistent with our safety standards.

WHAT DOES BEAUTYCOUNTER DO TO MANAGE SAFETY OF PRODUCTS WITH COLORANTS?

1. We screened the 65 colorants allowed for cosmetics in the US, and created an even shorter list that meets our standards of safety by running hazard and risk assessments for human health impacts. These are the colorants that are used to make Lakes:
 - a. We currently formulate with only 8 Lake pigments in our color cosmetics (FD&C Blue 1 Lake, FD&C Yellow 5 Lake, D&C Red 27 Lake, D&C Red 6 Lake, D&C Red 7 Lake, FD&C Red 40 Lake, D&C Red 28 Lake, D&C Red 30 Lake).
2. We also further restrict these Lake pigments depending on application site and product type (eyes vs. lips).
3. We conduct our own heavy metal analysis of the pigments (according to our stringent internal standards).
4. We screen these Lake pigments to avoid the presence of nanoparticles; in fact, these pigments are solid microparticles that cannot penetrate through the skin.
5. We run trace contaminant testing to detect unwanted impurities in the colorants.

COLORANTS FAQ

WHAT ABOUT TRACE CONTAMINANTS?

Natural colorants and/or the substrates used to manufacture Lakes come from the earth, so there is a potential risk of heavy metal contamination in the products. To help manage this risk and mitigate human health concerns, we test not only our pigments, but also each batch of our finished color cosmetic products to make sure that they meet our stringent internal standards for safety. As always, we do not believe any company can claim to be 100% free of all heavy metals, due to their ubiquitous nature in natural colorants and the manufacturing process.

WHAT ABOUT PESTICIDE EXPOSURE RISK?

Currently we do not use plant-based natural pigments, therefore the concern for pesticide contamination from these colorants is not applicable.