



Miamoo fact sheets:

Paraben Preservatives

What are they?

They are preservatives used as inhibitors of microbial growth and to extend shelf life of products.

How can I recognise them on a product label?

Common types of parabens used in baby skincare products include:

- Butylparaben
- propylparaben
- ethylparaben
- benzylparaben
- isobutylparaben.

Why are they potentially harmful to babies?

Studies have found that the biggest risk from parabens seems to be from the use of products that require a prolonged exposure to skin, such as skin creams and facial lotions. The longer that the parabens are on the skin, the more opportunity there is for parabens to be absorbed. When used in skin care products, parabens are absorbed directly into the blood stream rather than through the gastrointestinal tract. Parabens have been linked to:

- Dermatitis
- Premature ageing of the skin
- Increase in oestrogen which can possibly affect the male and female reproductive organs.
- Some studies in men have shown that a low sperm count and a decrease in testosterone are directly related to the intake of parabens.
- Breast cancer

Why are they unnecessary in baby skincare products?

Because there are a wide range of natural alternatives that are safe to use on baby skin, like

Aloe vera, Eucalyptus, Lavender, Manuka, Neem, Propolis, Rose, Rosemary, Sage, Sandalwood, Tea tree, Thyme, Willow bark, Witch hazel, Yerba mansa, Yucca.

Why do manufacturers use parabens?

- They are cheap and cost effective
- Extend shelf life

How to be informed about what you are putting on your baby's skin

- Know the ingredients that are potentially harmful
- Read the Label and check for the nasties
- Don't be duped by words and imagery on packaging like, "natural, organic, gentle, tear free, calming, soothing, hypoallergenic, dermatologically tested, pure.
- Don't use products on your baby just because your mum did – times and products have changed.
- Try and buy products which prevent you from dipping your fingers in the product.
Pumps are great!
- Don't always buy something because it's cheap – it may save pennies but could have long term effects on your baby's skin and well being.