PROPOLIS

also called... bee glue, bee bread, cera alba (bleached), cera flava (unbleached) or hive dross.

What is it?
Propolis is a wax-like substance made by honeybees as cement for their hives. It is a complex mixture of around 50 agents, including resins, waxes, essential oils, cinnamyl alcohol, cinnamic acid, vanillin, pollen, and some vitamins.

Where might it be found?
- Dental floss (e.g. Tom’s of Maine)
- Toothpaste (e.g. Natural Dentist, Desert Essence, Tom's of Maine)
- Mouthwash, canker sore care
- Lip balm (e.g. Burt's Bees, Kiss My Face, Basic Organics, Lysine)
- Lipstick, blush
- Makeup (Covermark, Dermablend)
- Moisturizer (e.g. Lily Organics)
- Lotions (e.g. several Burt’s Bees)
- Ointments (e.g. Burt’s Bees Baby Diaper Ointment, first aid ointment)
- Shaving cream, aftershave
- Sunscreen (e.g. Dr. Hauschka)
- Anti-aging mask, toner, serum
- Hair products (e.g. Iden Bee, Leonor Greyl)
- Facial cleanser, scrub
- Body wash, shower gel
- Depilatory wax
- Cuticle care
- First aid ointment
- Scar treatment, Royal Jelly

Also...Cough syrups, lozenges
- Vitamins and other pills
- Chewing gum, chewing chunks
- Beeswax candles
- Natural honey
- Health food store products
- Traditional medicines
- “Natural” or “folk” remedies
- Local anesthetic (Russia)
- Hobby wood
- Leather or wood varnish (Africa)
- Violin, cello, guitar varnish

How to avoid it:
To avoid propolis check the complete ingredient list of each product you use for any of the names above. For products already at home that do not list ingredients, go to the store and inspect the original box or package.

Your exposure to propolis may be from contact with a partner who uses products that contain it. Ask your aesthetician, masseuse, and others to avoid using products with propolis in your care.

To identify possible workplace exposure, check the complete ingredient list of each product you encounter there. It may be necessary to contact the manufacturer to learn if propolis is present in a commercial product. Wear protective rubber or vinyl gloves if you must handle products that contain propolis in your work.

Potential cross-reactions:
Since propolis is derived from tree resins (especially from poplar and conifer buds and bark), persons allergic to it may show cross-sensitivity with balsam of Peru, cinnamic aldehyde, cinnamic acid, cinnamyl alcohol, vanillin, and benzyl salicylate.

NOTE: Pharmaceutical grade beeswax does not contain propolis.