TOSYLAMIDE FORMALDEHYDE RESIN

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also called…toluenesulfonamide formaldehyde resin, TSF resin, tosylamide resin, or benzene sulfonamide.

What is it?
Tosylamide formaldehyde resin (TSFR) is a polymer used in most nail polish products to improve their strength, gloss, flow, and adhesion.

Where might it be found?
Nail polish
Nail varnish
Base coat
Top coat
Nail gloss
Nail enamel
Nail lacquer
Nail hardener
Nail fortifier
Nail growth promoter
Cuticle treatment
Ridge filler
Nail protein
Nail strengthenner
Acrylic nails
Quick-drying nail products
Hair styling glue

Nail polish is most sensitizing before it dries and hardens completely. The allergic reaction to TSFR commonly shows up at sites touched by the fingers rather than around the fingernails. Skin reactions may occur on the eyelids or sides of the neck, around the mouth and chin, on the upper chest, in the ear, on the genital area, or around the rectum. People who bite their nails may have dermatitis of their lips. Occasionally the skin beside the nails also becomes inflamed.

How to avoid it:
To avoid TSFR check the complete ingredient list of each product you use. Look for any of the names highlighted above. For products already at home that do not list ingredients, go to the store and inspect the original box or package. Some products’ ingredient lists are available on the internet at the manufacturer’s website, the store’s website, or at websites such as http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov, http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com, or http://www.drugstore.com.

Ask your manicurist to avoid using TSFR-containing products on you.

Because this allergy is common, there are now substitutes available that use other types of resins (polyester or alkyd). Some of these lower allergy nail products are made by Acquarella, Almay, Anise, Clinique, Estee Lauder, HoneyBee Gardens, Mary Kay, Peace Keeper, and Zoya. Always read the ingredient label to be sure there is no TSFR.

Some industrial uses:
Adhesive primer for resin
Film former
Nitrocellulose lacquer
Modifier for resin
Vinyl lacquer

Potential cross-reactions:
Some persons who are sensitive to TSFR will also react to formaldehyde. Ask your doctor if you should avoid formaldehyde releasing preservatives or certain fabric finishes.