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Coconut diethanolamide allergy

What is coconut diethanolamide and where is it found?

Coconut diethanolamide is a widely used surface active agent which helps to stabilise the foam in hand gels, hand-washing liquids, shampoos and dish-washing liquids. It is manufactured from coconut oil and is a non-ionic surfactant.

Products which may contain coconut diethanolamide

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All purpose cleaners • Barrier creams • Bath products • Cooling fluids • Cosmetics • Dish washing detergents • Disinfectants • Hand soaps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand washing liquids • Hydraulic mining oil • Industrial cleaners • Laundry detergents • Metalworking fluids • Sanitizers • Shampoo |
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Potential occupational exposures

- Machine operators
- Food preparations occupations
- Janitors and maids
- Sheet metal workers
- Health aids
- Heating, air and refrigeration mechanics.

What are the reactions to coconut diethanolamide allergy?

Coconut diethanolamide can rarely cause [contact allergic dermatitis](#), particularly on the hands. Leave-on products (hand-protection foams) cause sensitisation much more rapidly (2–3 months) than rinse-off products (hand-washing liquids; 5–7 years).

Am I allergic to coconut diethanolamide?

Coconut diethanolamide contact allergy is diagnosed by a positive [patch test](#) to coconut diethanolamide.

Treatment of contact dermatitis due to coconut diethanolamide exposure

If you are diagnosed with coconut diethanolamide allergy then avoid products which contain this. Read product

labels. It may take 2–3 weeks of avoiding exposure before improvement in the dermatitis occurs.

Standard treatment is used for the dermatitis i.e. [topical corticosteroids](#) and [emollients](#).

Alternative names for coconut diethanolamid

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- Coconut diethanolamine
- Coconut oil diethanolamine
- Coconut oil acid
- Cocamide DEA
- Ninol
- Witcamide
- Calamide

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Related information

References:

- Coconut diethanolamide: John L. Meisenheimer MD. www.OrlandoSkinDoc.com
- Coconut diethanolamide. Trey Truett MD. www.dermacom.ch/private/alindex/CO004.htm
- Occupational allergic contact dermatitis due to coconut diethanolamide (cocamide DEA). Pinola A, Estlander T, Jolanki R, Tarvainen K, Kanerva L. Contact Dermatitis. 1993 Nov;29(5):262–5.
- Allergy to cocamide DEA. Fowler JF Jr. Am J contact Dermat. 1998 Mar;9(10):40–1.
- Dentist's occupational allergic contact dermatitis caused by coconut diethanolamide, N-ethyl-4-toluene sulfonamide and 4-tolyldiethanolamine. Kanerva L, Jolanki R, Estlander T. 1: Acta Derm Venereol. 1993 Apr;73(2):126–9.

On DermNet NZ:

- [Dermatitis / eczema](#)
- [Eczema, dermatitis and allergies](#)

Other websites:

- [Contact Allergen Database](#)

Books about skin diseases:

See the [DermNet NZ bookstore](#)

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DermNet does not provide an on-line consultation service.

If you have any concerns with your skin or its treatment, see a [dermatologist](#) for advice.

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