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Airborne allergic contact dermatitis from colophony in a car

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Key words: airborne; allergic contact dermatitis; colophony; car; motor vehicle; adhesives. © Munksgaard, 1999.

Case Report

A 27-year-old district nurse, with a history of childhood atopic dermatitis, developed a pruritic rash on her face every time she drove her VW GolfTM car to work, particularly if it was well-heated. On examination, there was erythema and slight scaling on her upper eyelids, forehead and cheeks.

Patch testing with the European standard series (Chemotechnique Diagnostics, Malmö, Sweden) showed a ++ reaction to colophony, but a negative prick test.

Discussion

Colophony is a known cause of airborne allergic contact dermatitis (1, 2). The Norwegian importer of the

car confirmed that colophony was present in adhesives in the linings of the roof and doors, and inside the dashboard.

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