

Short Communication

Bowlers' grip

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Case Report

A 62-year-old retired man presented with a 4-year history of dermatitis on both palms and the finger tips. Patch testing with our standard series and fingertip series showed positive reactions at 2 and 4 days to thiuram mix (++) and epoxy resin (++).

The patient was a regular crown-green bowls player and, in view of his thiuram sensitivity, it was thought that his rubber bowling mat was the cause. However, rubber avoidance failed to improve his hand eczema. Analysis of his bowls polish was then performed at the Department of Occupational and Environmental Dermatology, Malmö University Hospital, Sweden. The presence of DGEBA-type standard epoxy resin (0.1%) was demonstrated by gel permeation chromatography followed by HPLC.

The Australian manufacturers were asked for details of the bowls polish composition. Epoxy resin was not listed as an ingredient and we were unable to obtain samples of constituents from the manufacturers for analysis. The individual suppliers of the declared ingredients were contacted, but we could not identify any of these as a source of epoxy resin. No other exposure

to epoxy resin was identified in this case, and since avoiding the bowls polish, the patient's hand eczema has cleared.

Comment

Bowls polish is not merely used to clean bowls but to enhance grip. Some bowlers exploit this property by rubbing their hands with it prior to a game, thus increasing exposure. Dermatological hazards of the sport have been reported before (1, 2), colophony, balsam of Peru and perfume mix all having been identified as contact allergens in bowls polish. We can find no previous reports of bowls polish as a source of epoxy resin.

References

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