

Book Review

J J Hostýnek, H I Maibach, editors. *Copper and the Skin*. USA: Informa Healthcare; 2006. 328 pp. Hardback. \$115. ISBN 978-0-8493-9532-1

Copper is widely used in industrial applications, household products, as well as agricultural pesticides and fungicides. Copper is essential for the synthesis of haemoglobin in humans. Copper is having an interesting place in the history of medicine and in modern medicine as an anti-inflammatory agent particularly in the treatment of arthritis. The possible place in evidence-based medicine is still under evaluation. Copper is a contact allergen. Most positive reactions occur as cross-sensitivity to nickel and palladium. 'Copper and the Skin' is an interesting book covering basic aspects of copper as part of alloys, corrosion and chemistry, skin metabolism and penetration,

dermal toxicology including irritation and hypersensitivity. A challenging chapter is the historical review by Roberto Milanino and finally the chapters covering the use of copper in chronic inflammatory diseases. The book is written in well-organized chapters and carefully edited. Even if copper for the contact dermatitis interested dermatologists is a rare event we have patients asking questions concerning this metal on a regular basis. The book is highly recommended in the library as a reference source.

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