

References

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Frequency of sensitivity to Grotan BK in Denmark

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Sensitivity to Grotan® (hexahydro, 1, 3, 5 tris (2-hydroxyethyl) triazine) used as a preservative in cutting oils was recently described by Keczkés & Brown (1976). Previous publications suggest that the sensitizing properties of Grotan are so strong that sensitivity might be frequent in a mixed material of patients with eczema (Hjorth 1976).

Materials and Methods

A group of Danish dermatologists in practice included in their standard patch test series in 1976-1977 a 2 % aqueous solution of Grotan BK (a mixture of hexahydro, 1, 3, 5 tris (2-hydroxyethyl) triazine 80 %, N-oxy-methyl-amino derivatives (not specified) 4 % and water 16 %). The total number tested were 694.

Grotan BK did not seem to give irritant reactions when tested 2 % in water. At the Department of Dermatology, Gentofte Hospital the concentrations were then increased to 5 % aq. and 5 % pet.

Results

Among a total of 694 patients tested in dermatological practice 13 (2 %) had a positive reaction to Grotan BK 2 % aq. Sensitivity occurred with greater frequency in women than in men (Table 1).

Among 39 patients tested with Grotan BK 5 % aq. and 5 % pet. at Gentofte Hospital, two had positive patch test reactions to both Grotan BK 5 % aq. and 5 % pet., while one only had positive reactions to Grotan BK 5 %

Table 1. Grotan BK 2 % aq. in standard series

	No. tested	Positive
M	271	3
F	423	10
Total	694	13 (2 %)

pet. Further, 80 consecutive patients patch-tested with Grotan BK 5 % pet. had negative reactions.

Relevance of positive reactions

Grotan BK is a formalin releaser (Table 3) and in fact, among 13 patients with positive reactions to Grotan BK 2 % aq., seven also had positive patch test reactions to formalin, while six were sensitive to Grotan BK only. Six of those tested had a positive patch test reaction to formalin but gave a negative reaction to Grotan BK (Table 4).

Among a total of 119 patients tested with Grotan BK 5 % pet. two were positive to Grotan BK and formalin, one to Grotan BK only and one to formalin only. The reaction to Grotan BK only was unexplained. The two coincident reactions to formalin and Grotan

Table 2. Grotan BK 5 % pet. and 5 % aq. in standard series

	pos.	neg.
Grotan BK 5 % pet.	3	36
Grotan BK 5 % aq.	2	37

BK could likewise not be traced to Grotan BK.

Since undiluted Grotan BK as well as fresh prepared dilutions release formalin, positive patch tests may occur in formalin-sensitive patients.

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Table 3. Analysis of test material (Blohm 1959)

	Days of Formalin storage	+/-
Grotan BK 2 % and 5 % pet.	180	+
Grotan BK 2 % aq.	180	+
Grotan BK 5 % aq.	1	+
Grotan BK 5 % aq.	0	+
Grotan BK as is	-	+
Control	-	-

Table 4. Grotan BK 2 % aq. in standard series. Total tested: M: 271 F: 423

	M	F
Grotan BK positive formalin positive:	2	5
Grotan BK positive formalin negative:	1	5
Grotan BK negative formalin positive:	2	4 *

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Allergy to lichens with photosensitivity

PER THUNE

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Reports of contact sensitivity to lichens or woodcutter's disease are rare and probably often overlooked or misdiagnosed. Cases have been described by Le Coulant & Lopez (1956) in France and Mitchell (1965) in Canada. Dermatitis from exposure to lichens is most likely to occur in forest workers but people may also be exposed by carrying fire wood, from wood ash, or from lichens used in table decorations and funeral wreaths. Champion (1965) described recurrent dermatitis occurring in a woodcutter's wife. She reacted to wood dust from her husband's clothes containing different lichens. Usnic acid, atranorin and evernic acid, which are related to the furocou-

marans, have been shown to be allergens contained in lichens (Mitchell & Shibata 1969).

My study concerns 10 patients (six males and four females, aged 32-79 years) suffering from dermatitis, particularly on light-exposed sites but sometimes also involving areas not exposed to sunlight, such as the groins, legs and lower part of the trunk. The pattern may be suggestive of an airborne contact dermatitis; however, all patients had a history of photosensitivity. In two patients the rash started in the winter season with little or no sun at all. All patients had an abnormal reaction to longwave UVR on light testing; two patients even showed a papular reaction