

Argan powder found in some cosmetics linked with occupational asthma

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Argan powder, which is used by the cosmetic industry in the production of foundation products, could be linked with occupational asthma.

A small study, presented at the European Respiratory Society (ERS) Annual Congress in Barcelona today (9 September 2013), has found the first evidence of a risk associated with the use of argan powder during the industrial production of cosmetics.

A sample of nine patients from a cosmetic factory in France were analysed in the study. All participants were exposed to the product in three different forms: crude granules, powder or liquid.

Each participant completed a questionnaire about their medical history. Lung function tests and allergy tests were also carried out, along with an inhalation challenge test, which examines the airways specific reaction to a substance (in this case argan).

Out of the nine workers, four displayed [asthma](#) or rhinitis symptoms and had a blocked nose when handling argan powder. The results found that three of them had occupational asthma caused by argan powder, proved by specific challenge tests. Two of the four also had a positive allergy skin prick-test to argan powder.

Dr Emmanuelle Penven, lead author of the study, said: "Occupational asthma can be a debilitating condition if it prevents a person from working. This study is very preliminary but does suggest an association

between argan powder and occupational asthma. Our initial findings warrant further research to understand any health risks associated with the compound."

Provided by European Lung Foundation

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