

FDA warns of allergic reactions with acne products

June 25 2014, by Matthew Perrone

Federal health officials are warning consumers who use popular anti-acne treatments about rare but potentially deadly allergic reactions that can cause swelling of the face and difficulty breathing.

The Food and Drug Administration said Wednesday the problems have been reported with gels, face washes, pads and other products that contain two ingredients: benzoyl peroxide or [salicylic acid](#). But the agency says it's unclear whether those ingredients trigger the reactions or whether some other combination of ingredients is to blame.

The over-the-counter treatments are sold as Proactiv, Neutrogena, MaxClarity, Oxy, Aveeno and other brands.

For now the agency wants consumers to stop using the products immediately if they experience tightness of the throat, breathing problems, lightheadedness or swelling of the eyes, face or lips. Users can test their sensitivity to a new treatment by dabbing a small amount on their skin for three days. If they don't experience a reaction the product can generally be used safely as directed.

An FDA analysis uncovered 131 reports of serious allergic reactions with topical acne drugs over the last 44 years. None of the cases were fatal, but 44 percent of people had to be hospitalized. Most of the problems emerged within 24 hours of first using the treatment.

Regulators stressed that these [hypersensitivity reactions](#) are much more

serious than rashes and irritations often seen with skin products.

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