

Recent FDA Testing Shows Lead in Lipsticks, Agency Maintains Levels are Safe

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Recent Food and Drug Administration (FDA) test results show that detectible amounts of lead continue to be found in lipstick, but do not present a safety risk to product consumers. According to the recent FDA test data, lead levels in some products have risen since FDA initiated its testing program in 2007.



Reports of lead in lipstick have surfaced periodically over the last several years. In 2007, the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics released a report stating that it had found lead in lipsticks on the market at that time. FDA conducted testing of 20 lipsticks in 2007 and found an average lead content of 1.07 parts per million (ppm). The highest range detected was 3.06 ppm. In 2010, FDA and expanded its testing to 400 lipsticks, resulting in an average lead concentration of 1.11 ppm. The lead levels of certain lipsticks rose significantly since the 2007 testing, however, with 7.19 ppm being the highest level detected. For a table of the results and further information, see [FDA Analyses of Lead in Lipsticks - Expanded Survey](#). The expanded survey will be published in the May/June, 2012, issue of the Journal of Cosmetic Science.

FDA has not set an upper limit for overall lead content in lipstick. Color additives are limited to maximum specified levels, typically no more than 20 ppm for cosmetic products. However, FDA is assessing whether an overall lead limit is appropriate. The agency website states: "Although we do not believe that the lead content found in our recent lipstick analyses poses a safety concern, we are evaluating whether there may be a need to recommend an upper limit for lead in lipstick in order to further protect the health and welfare of consumers."