

## **Lip care products should not contain any boric acid**

BfR Opinion No. 003/2009, 6 August 2008

The use of boric acid in cosmetics for oral hygiene is regulated by law. These provisions do not, however, apply to lip care products. At present, they may contain a 30 times higher concentration of boric acid than oral care products as lip care products are not separately listed in the Cosmetics Ordinance and are, therefore, deemed to be "other products".

Boric acid and borates – the names given to the salts and esters of boric acid – are weak disinfectants. In cosmetics production they are mainly used as emulsifiers and stabilisers. Because of their chemical properties they influence the consistency and temperature stability of emulsions. However, boric acid and borates have a reprotoxic potential.

Against this backdrop the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) assessed the use of boric acid in lip care products. The Institute comes to the conclusion that the amount of boric acid absorbed by consumers from lip care products is very low. Hence, there is no health threat to consumers.

BfR has, however, already pointed out in the past that the tolerable daily intake of boron by children may be exceeded as a consequence of their consumption of mineral waters with a high level of boric acid. Hence, any additional uptake from cosmetics should be avoided. According to BfR the use of these substances in cosmetics should generally be avoided.

The full text of the Opinion in German can be accessed on

[http://www.bfr.bund.de/cm/206/lippenpflegemittel\\_sollten\\_keine\\_borsaere\\_enthalten.pdf](http://www.bfr.bund.de/cm/206/lippenpflegemittel_sollten_keine_borsaere_enthalten.pdf)