

# HARMONISED ALLERGY ALERT TEST

## FAQS FOR SALON PROFESSIONALS

### WHY IS THERE A NEW, HARMONISED ALLERGY ALERT TEST (AAT)?

**Cosmetics Europe**, the European trade association for the cosmetics and personal care industry, has published a **Recommendation** on the Allergy Alert Test (AAT) for hair colouring products, which will help professionals and clients by providing clear and consistent instructions on how to perform the Allergy Alert Test.

To support our members with the implementation of this harmonised process, the NHBF have enhanced our guidelines and materials.

This harmonised process is a very positive step, resulting from several years of work and a scientific **study** showing that the AAT is effective. It should enable salons to conduct the test the same way for all brands, simplifying the process for salon professionals.

### HOW SHOULD AATs BE DONE?

Follow the instructions which are provided by the manufacturer.

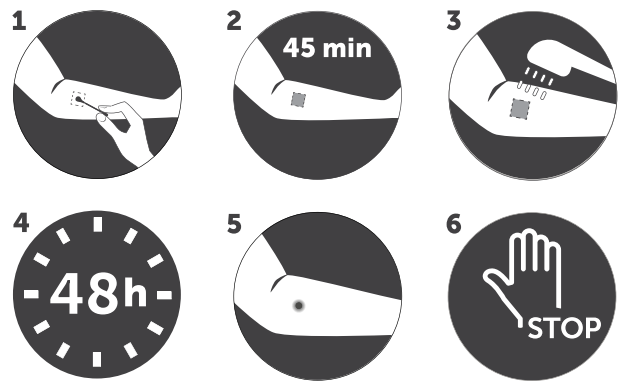
Manufacturers are now moving towards a harmonised protocol where a small amount of the colorant and developer are mixed together, applied to the inner forearm and washed off after 45 minutes.



### IS THE NEW AAT PROCESS DIFFERENT FROM THE CURRENT ONE?

Firstly, it is important to check your insurance policy wording to understand whether your insurer has any specific requirements.

If you are in any doubt about whether the protocol applies to your situation, then follow the manufacturer's instructions. Manufacturers are also happy to answer any questions you might have about which situations their protocols apply to.



In summary, the product and developer are mixed together and applied to the inner forearm. Use a pea-sized amount and spread in a thin layer. Leave the mixture for 45 minutes without covering or touching it; avoid contact with clothes; after 45 minutes wash the test area with water and pat dry with a clean tissue.

If there are any changes to the normal skin appearance, such as itching, redness, swelling on and around the test area during the testing time, rinse off the test area immediately and do not use the product.

**The harmonised recommendation recommends conducting the test on the forearm, but the scientific study on which the recommendation is based did not find an efficacy difference if the test was conducted either on the forearm as this makes the test easier for the client to read, or behind the ear.**

There is a standardised set of instructions accompanying the pictograms. You can see the text of the instructions in the Recommendation from Cosmetics Europe.

To access the Recommendation, please **click here**.

## DOES MY CLIENT NEED TO SIT IN THE SALON FOR 45 MINUTES SO I CAN WASH THE TEST OFF?

The **NHBF protocols** should always be followed. The client does not need to stay in the salon for 45 minutes - once the AAT test has been completed the client should be asked to leave the mixture applied for 45 minutes without touching or covering it. They should avoid contact of the test area with clothes. The client should be advised that the mixture will dry on the arm after approximately a few minutes. After 45 minutes they should wash the test area with water and pat dry with a clean tissue.

You **MUST** record that you have provided the client with this information and for the purposes of record keeping and insurance requirements, the client must confirm they have agreed by getting them to sign the record card to say they will follow the instructions as requested.

**ALWAYS** check your insurance policy wording to understand whether your insurer has any specific requirements.

If you are in any doubt about whether the protocol applies to your situation, then follow the manufacturer's instructions. Manufacturers are also happy to answer any questions you might have about which situations their protocols apply to.

Find out more about Allergy Alert Test Industry Protocols in the **NHBF FAQs**.

This test represents an important precaution measure which has proved to be reliable when carried out under the conditions outlined. However, be aware that even if an AAT has been carried out, there can still be an allergic reaction when the hair is coloured. The AAT does not provide a guarantee that allergic reactions will not occur in the future. In case of any concerns or questions please encourage your client to consult a doctor.



## WHO DECIDES WHETHER THE AAT SHOWS A REACTION OR NOT?

The client needs to monitor the test area for the 45 minutes testing time, and importantly also for 48 hours following this. If they observe any changes to the normal skin appearance, such as itching, redness, swelling on and around the test area, they should inform you because they will not be able to have the colour service. Encourage your client to consult a doctor.

## WHY SHOULD AATS BE DONE?

Allergies to hair dyes are very rare, most people will have no problems using hair dyes. However, in rare cases when allergies happen, they can be severe. The AAT is an important precaution and gives the client a signal that a reaction may occur if they go on to colour their hair.

Allergies can develop at any stage of life, and even after the same product has been used many times before with no problems. This is why it is really important to regularly repeat the AAT.

Read more about hair dyes and allergy at **thefactsabout**.

The NHBF have been working with **CTPA** and partner insurance broker **Jensten Insurance Brokers** (previously Coversure Branches Limited) to ensure our members are fully prepared for the roll out of the Harmonised Allergy Alert Test recommendation.