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Representing the personal care products industry

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E. Edward Kavanaugh
President

CTFA Response Statement
(To be used to respond to inquiries.)

Inhalation Safety

CTFA Response Statement (to be used to respond to inquiries) - Safety of Talc

The National Toxicology Program (NTP) recently issued a draft report that noted female rats exposed to massive amounts of airborne talc developed lung tumors. Male rats and male and female mice similarly exposed did not show lung tumors. During the peer review of the study, a number of problems with the conduct of the study were raised. The NTP is now reviewing the results of the peer review and will issue a final report after its review and after modification of the report.

There have been a number of screening tests for carcinogenicity previously conducted using talc. None of these showed any effect. The most thorough study was one sponsored by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In addition, all previous long term studies in animals, with a wide variety of exposures, have been negative. Finally, human studies on talc and cancer in industrial settings have shown that industrial exposure to talc, both by skin contact and inhalation, even at levels thousands of times higher than lifetime consumer exposure, presents no significant risk.

In a 1977 editorial review in The Lancet, it was concluded that there was no reason to believe that normal human exposure to cosmetic talc has led to cancer at any site.

In 1987, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) reviewed all scientific information on talc, including reports of animal and in vitro studies, case reports, and all epidemiologic data. IARC did not find adequate evidence to conclude that talc without asbestos (cosmetic grade) caused cancer in either animals or humans.

We intend to thoroughly review this study. However, we are confident that the information available continues to support the safety in use of cosmetic grade talc.

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