



## Patient Information Leaflet

### Mercaptobenzothiazole (MBT)

You are allergic to Mercaptobenzothiazole. This means that you should avoid contact with this substance in future.

Mercaptobenzothiazole is the most frequently used rubber 'accelerator' (i.e. a chemical used to speed up polymerisation when preparing rubber). It is present in natural and synthetic rubber products. There are also non-rubber sources of exposure.

Most patients allergic to MBT will have been sensitised by wearing rubber shoes or insoles. Usually the rash will have been in the shape of the shoe component but this is not invariable and the rash may be on one foot only. Other sources of exposure include rubber gloves and rubber elastic in underwear.

**If sensitised to MBT in shoes** patients should wear all-leather shoes with no inner sole (like moccasins), plastic shoes or wooden clogs. If there is difficulty acquiring shoes without rubber insoles, patient should remove the insoles before wearing and replace with those made from piano felt, cork, or plastic. Old shoes tend to be more allergenic than new, as sweating leaches the MBT out of the rubber in the shoe. Old socks contaminated with MBT should be discarded.

#### **Some information on appropriate footwear may be available from:**

Satra Footwear Technology Centre, Satra House, Rockingham Road, Kettering NN16 9JH.

**If gloves have been the source of sensitisation** patients should avoid rubber (latex) gloves and instead use vinyl gloves (PVC), if these are appropriate. These are widely available e.g. Synsation from Ansell Medical or Tru Touch from Becton Dickinson (01865-748844). If vinyl gloves are not strong enough, try Ansell Dermaprene (neoprene)- an MBT, thiuram, carba and rubber-free variety of glove (contains thioureas) or Becton and Dickinson Neolon (neoprene) which is MBT, thiuram, thiourea and rubber-free (contains carbamates). An alternative is Elastyren (Styrene butadiene polymer) from Hermal, Germany (00-40-72704-266) which is MBT, thiuram, thiourea and rubber-free (contains carbamates).

**Safe bandages in leg ulcer patients** are those made of Viscose, Polyamide, Elastane and Cotton. Safe compression bandages are Tensopress and Setopress. Bandages with less compression that are safe are Rosidal K and Comprilan and for a tubular bandage use Tubigauz or Tubifast (not Tubigrip). For compression stockings use those made from Elastane, Lycra or Nylon e.g. Duo-Med.

#### **Sources of MBT:**

Shoes, insoles, gloves

Rubber in underwear, swimwear

Bandages and medical devices

Renal dialysis equipment

Tyres and tubes

Antifreeze and anti corrosive agents

Fungicides and detergents

Tick and flea powders and sprays

Elastic bands

Sponges, applicators, eyelash curlers, rubber masks

Rubber sheets, pillows, hot water bottles

Condoms and diaphragms

Balloons, toys, rubber bands

Cutting oils, greases

Cements and adhesives

Photographic film emulsion

Bicycle and golf club handles

Neoprene adhesives eg shoes