



## Patient Information Leaflet

### Myroxylon pereirae ( Balsam of Peru)

Balsam of Peru (INCI name *Myroxylon pereirae*) is the natural resinous balsam which exudes from the trunk of the Central American tree *Myroxylon pereirae* after scarification of the bark. It is a natural mixture of resins and essential oils. Its composition varies and has not been fully defined but 60-70% of the resins are well known and include: benzyl benzoate, benzyl cinnamate, cinnamic acid, benzoic acid, vanillin, nerolidol and farnesol (which is increasingly being used in deodorants).

Many perfumes and flavourings contain components either identical to or cross reacting with materials contained in Balsam of Peru and other natural resins.

It has been used as a healing salve because of its fragrance and antibacterial, antifungal and antiscabetic properties. A common source of sensitisation is the **haemorrhoid preparation Anusol**.

A positive test may indicate allergy to spices such as cinnamon, cloves, cardamom and nutmeg. Spice allergic patients may have a rash on the hands, or rarely symptoms of the tongue, lips or angles of the mouth from ingestion of spice containing foods but most patients can eat a normal diet.

#### **Products that you may need to avoid:**

Perfumed products (cosmetics, toiletries) and balms  
Medicated creams, ointments and suppositories  
Spices and citrus fruit peel  
Chewing gum, sweets, cola and cola-like soft drinks  
Cough mixtures and lozenges  
Tobacco  
Eugenol (clove-like odour in dental preparations)  
Chinese medicaments (Chinese Balm and Tiger Balm)