

Baby soft not enough, FDA says

By SHERRY KAHAN

You may be content if your cosmetics "make you feel baby soft all over." But that doesn't satisfy the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Its staff must make sure they are also safe, said Diane Place of the consumer affairs department of the Detroit FDA office.

"Cosmetics should be prepared from appropriate ingredients," she said. "If we investigate a cosmetic plant and find that lye is being put in the products, we would consider it an inappropriate ingredient."

Finding such an ingredient would galvanize FDA into a number of

actions, from asking for a recall to going so far as to prosecute the manufacturer in federal court.

Her speech on cosmetics was addressed to members of the Wayne County Association of Extension Homemakers in the First United Methodist Church of Garden City. It covered both cosmetics and over-the-counter drugs, both of which are more connected than most people suppose, she said.

"Cosmetics must be safe and made of appropriate ingredients. Drugs sold without prescription must be safe and effective for their intended use. If they say it cures a headache, it must fulfill this therapeutic claim," she said.

If it changes a body function, it is also a drug. An anti-perspirant which stops perspiration is a drug. A deodorant which prevents odor is a cosmetic. The cosmetic industry can thereby promise you anything in the way of sexiness, skin as soft as a baby's bottom or shining hair. But if a product claims to grow eyelashes, the product becomes a drug and must be able to back up its promises.

THE FDA WORRIES about two aspects of cosmetic safety, the ingredients and how clean they can be kept.

"Some hair dyes contain coal tar," said Ms. Place. "FDA has no jurisdiction over coal tar. It doesn't have to be safe, and it is not safe. It has been regarded as a possible cancer cause if absorbed by the skin. But all the products have to have a special warning."

All other hair dyes are regulated. Two substances recently were removed from them to make them safer. Congress is now considering laws that would allow the FDA to regulate coal tar in dyes.

The most dangerous cosmetic in terms of contaminants is mascara, opined the speaker.

"When you take it out of a tube with a brush, the brush touches the eyelashes, which are full of bacteria," she said. That's why the eyelashes are there, to keep bacteria out of the eyes.

"The bacteria on the brush is immediately transmitted from the brush back to the mascara. You should throw your mascara out after six months."

She said that one can get a disease from contaminated mascara that can cause almost total blindness. However, that is rare, she said.

"Cosmetics should be kept clean," she said with emphasis. "Every time your hand goes into your cream, unless the hand is scrubbed, you are introducing bacteria to the cream."

"Keep your hands clean and keep the cream out of the light and heat."

Tubes, she thinks, are the ideal containers. She also likes a spout.

Ms. Place also warned her listeners about carrying mascara eye pencils in their handbags. The tips come off, making them more dangerous. She added that eye doctors regard as unsafe a new fad of penciling in a line above the lower lashes.

MAKE YOUR OWN cosmetics, she suggested. "You can find a cheap face cream in Crisco or Spry," she said, adding, "I wouldn't prefer it."

"You can use vegetable oil, mineral oil or olive oil. The moisturizer is water. The cream is used to hold the water in. The heavier the cream, the better it holds it in."

"Vaseline is a fine cream. It's the cheapest, a great lubricant and a great sun cream."

A member of the audience shared her interest in "making" cosmetics at home. She said: "My face looked like a steamroller in the morning until I started giving it a good rub with Lava soap."

Ms. Place decided that particular method was based on the principle of abrasion. "If it works, fine," she said. She was also questioned about the use of paraffin in removing wrinkles. "It won't do a thing," she answered. "Some wrinkles a plastic surgeon couldn't remove."

She recommended keeping the skin lubricated, in the fight against wrinkles. Also keep out of the sun. "It is hard on the skin and will age you faster than anything," she added.

She told her audience that buying mouthwash was a big waste of money, that toothpaste is less abrasive on the teeth than tooth powder, and "there is no such thing as a hypo-allergic cosmetic." Formulas to define the latter have been thrown out of court.

At one time, a manufacturer had to prove that his hypo-allergic product triggered significantly fewer reactions than another product "which did not claim to be hypo-allergic, and had at least 10 percent of market sales." A judge rejected this confusing formula saying it was hard to comply with and hard for the FDA to enforce.

SHE REGARDS the listing of ingredients on cosmetics as helpful in several ways.

"It helps a person who is allergic avoid a product containing a substance which troubles them. It also allows consumers to compare contents of similar products, and pick the one that is least expensive, providing they like the perfume equally."

She warned against the use of

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— Diane Place,
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cosmetics with aerosol sprays. "Remember it is putting particles in the air which you are breathing," she said. "You are also paying extra for the spraying when you might be able to dispense the cosmetic in a more economical way."

Permanent waves can be dangerous, she said, because of a possible reaction from the chemicals used.

"You can use a brand for years but because of some change in your body, you have a reaction," she stated. Occasionally a manufacturer may change to a different formula, which may give a person a rash.

THE OVERSIGHT of thousands of over-the-counter drugs has been so formidable that FDA recently established 17 committees to write an official recipe for various drug categories. Thus, to be acceptable, an ingredient must be safe and effective as an antacid, pain killer or antiepileptic. "Any other ingredients are out," she said.

She pointed out that all the panels have turned in their report except for the one dealing with miscellaneous external and internal non-prescription drugs. She hopes this will be completed soon because it deals with the more "far out" kinds of products, such as weight pills, thumb sucking remedies, wrinkle removers and hair straighteners.

"These are the categories where you are most likely to find ineffective or quack products," she said.

Future meetings of the Wayne County Association of Extension Homemakers will involve updating wardrobes, and furniture refinishing and antiquing. Wardrobe updating will be from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Saturday, April 28, with June Grossbart of Wayne State University.

On May 12 at the same time, John Bertalan of Greenfield Village will discuss furniture. Both talks will be in the First United Presbyterian Church, 6443 Merriman, Garden City.

Biblical scholar here for series of lectures

Biblical scholar Dr. Edward P. Blair comes to Orchard United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road, for a lecture series called "Jesus' Life and Ours." The four-session series will run May 6-8.

Dr. Blair is professor emeritus of New Testament interpretation at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., and has done extensive archeological research in the Holy Land and in Italy.

In 1964-65 he was editor of "Biblical Research," a journal.

He is author of "The Abingdon Bible Handbook," and a contributor of "The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible" and "The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible."

He is the biblical and historical consultant for a new movie, "One Who Was

There," starring Maureen O'Sullivan as Mary Magdalene.

Dr. Blair will lead the Sunday, May 6, worship services in the church to lead off the lecture series, at 9:30 and 11 a.m. His topic will be "From Sight to Insight."

Sunday at 7 p.m. the series continues with "Jesus and John the Baptist." Monday, May 7, the subject is "Jesus and His Disciples," and Tuesday, May 8, the subject is "Jesus and His Critics." Both will begin at 8 p.m.

Dr. Blair took an early retirement from teaching at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, to complete the "Handbook of the Bible," and to work with lay people in understanding the Bible, after 25 years of training ministers.



Diane Place of the U.S. Detroit Office of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration exchanges a few words with Martha Mazur of Redford Township following her speech on cosmetics to Wayne County Association of Extension Homemakers. (Staff photo).

We're professionals'

Cosmetologist blasts merger

By MARGARET MILLER

Strong opposition to a proposal that would merge licensing boards of barbers and cosmetologists is being voiced by a Livonian who has served as vice president of the Michigan Cosmetology Association.

Marcus Bass, a hairdresser who has worked in area salons since coming to this country from England in 1932, is lobbying against the move recommended by William Ballinger, licensing and regulation director, in the interest of saving money and eliminating government activity.

Such action, said Bass, would be unfair to some 69,000 cosmetologists and a disservice to the public that uses their services.

"The board of licensing for our profession was second only to the real estate board in the number of licenses issued," said Bass. "It brought three

quarters of a million into the state general fund. When I speak to legislators and quote those figures, they are amazed."

Bass said he can understand the wish on the part of state officials to institute some "sunset legislation" measures and move toward more economical practices.

"I know there are some boards that do not pay their own way from the standpoint of bringing in less than cover the cost of board operation," he added.

"But this certainly is not true in the case of the cosmetologist."

HE ALSO MAINTAINS "it is wrong to merge two different professions under the same board of licensing."

"We are professional people," he stated, "and through the training we keep giving our members and the constant upgrading of our requirements,

we feel we have a better knowledge of many facets of our business."

While both barbers and hairdressers deal with hair, he pointed out, there are differences in emphasis that need to be considered in the state boards of licensing.

"We pay more attention to chemistry, biology, scalp and hair diseases," he went on. "We also deal primarily with female customers and have developed techniques that are better understood by examining boards with a cosmetology background."

"There are differences in the way we and the barbers conduct ourselves professionally, and we would like to keep it that way."

SOME DIFFERENCES have developed between the two groups in recent years, Bass noted. One was the matter of cosmetologists' cutting men's hair. That was settled when the state legisla-

ture passed in July 1978 a provision that a cosmetologist can cut the hair of persons of either sex.



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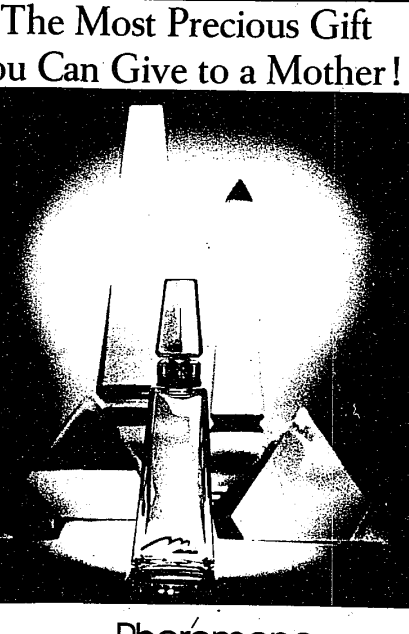


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