

Further Information: Cetyl/Stearyl Alcohol & Cetearyl Alcohol

Cetyl and cetearyl alcohols are structurally similar. They are fatty alcohols used as emollients, emulsifiers, thickeners and carrying agents for other ingredients. They can be derived naturally (coconut fatty alcohol) or synthetically. They are not irritants and are not related to SD alcohol or ethyl alcohol which are drying alcohols.

A review by the Expert Panel of the CIR (1988) concluded that both compounds "are safe as cosmetic ingredients in the present practices of use". These compounds are commonly used in numerous categories of cosmetic products generally at concentrations up to 10%. However, some products may contain as much as 50%.