

Why Not Paint Faces of Under 2's?

The following information has been gathered from a Biomedical Scientist (who is also a face painter) in consultation with a doctor.

Irritant Contact dermatitis: Fragrances and dyes are known to be irritating to young babies' skin and Cosmetics Europe, the cosmetic industry's European trade association stipulates that cosmetics products intended for use on children below the age of two must undergo a specific safety assessment.

Allergic contact dermatitis: This occurs when the immune system reacts against a specific substance as if it were trying to attack the body. This substance is then called an allergen. You only need a small amount of allergen in contact with the skin to cause a rash and this can happen even after years of uneventful use of the same product. Children are not born with this type of allergy – they must have previously come into contact with the allergen which has then 'sensitized' the immune system. Once sensitized, the skin reacts and becomes inflamed with it comes into further contact with the allergen.

Removal: The general recommendation is to remove face and body paint with a dermatological soap or baby shampoo and warm water; and always before the end of the day. Excessive scrubbing to remove paint should not be necessary and could damage skin. There is also potential for skin to be irritated by a reaction between substances in baby wipes and paint that has been safely applied.