

Criteria for allergy-friendly detergents and cleaning products

Basic situation

Cleaning agents can cause irritation of the respiratory tract in persons with asthma due to the presence of fragrances or the fine mist of sprayers.

The ECARF Seal of Quality identifies cleaning agents that do not cause any deterioration in the condition of allergic persons or respiratory-sensitive persons.

The necessary evidence shall include an examination and evaluation of the formulation as well as an application test. Both tests are explained in more detail below.

1. Product composition

The particular formulation properties result from the selection and concentration of ingredients. For both – tolerability of the substance and acceptable concentration levels – must exist empirical or theoretical evidence. The proof of tolerability can be provided by at least one of the following possibilities:

- Abstinence of substances which are typically used in such products and which could be problematic for allergic persons. Allergen substances are reduced (“Minimal composition”),
- The product composition has a reduced risk potential (“no preservatives”, “no dust build-up”, “perfume free” etc.) in comparison with a standard product of the same type,
- Substances are used in amounts below the critical threshold values as determined in experiments or clinical studies.

2. User test of the target group

The product composition is tested in a user test of the target group. The assessment is generally carried out through use of the product by at least 20 patients with medically diagnosed symptoms of allergic asthma. If over the course of a previously determined period of time none of the patients show signs of worsening allergic symptoms, the product’s suitability for allergic persons and proof of the allergy-friendliness is deemed to have been achieved.