Upgrading ingredient list in an outdated and potentially dangerous cosmetic product - case study

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Introduction	The pursuit of effective yet safe ingredients is paramount. Today, we delve into the ingredients list of a popular product: **The Ordinary's Retinol 0.5% in Squalane**, with a focus on identifying and proposing alternatives to any components that might raise safety concerns. Among its ingredients, one, in particular, stands out for its controversial safety profile: Butylated Hydroxytoluene (BHT).
Ingredients list analysis	INCI list: Squalane, Caprylic/Capric Triglyceride, Simmondsia Chinensis (Jojoba) Seed Oil, Retinol 0.5%, Solanum Lycopersicum (Tomato) Fruit Extract, Rosmarinus Officinalis (Rosemary) Leaf Extract, Hydroxymethoxyphenyl Decanone, BHT. Most of these ingredients are celebrated for their beneficial properties, from squalane's moisturizing benefits to retinol's acclaimed anti-ageing effects and are considered completely safe. However, BHT, a synthetic antioxidant used to prevent the oxidation of oils and fats, has come under scrutiny. Concerns about BHT include its status as a potential endocrine disruptor, which could interfere with the body's hormonal functions.
Replacing BHT	When it comes to finding a substitute for BHT, the goal is to maintain the ingredient's antioxidative benefits without compromising safety. One promising candidate is Vitamin E (Tocopherol). - Natural Antioxidant: Vitamin E is a potent natural antioxidant that can effectively prevent oxidative damage to the product's formulation, similar to BHT but without the associated health concerns. - Skin Benefits: Beyond its antioxidative properties, Vitamin E also offers significant benefits to the skin, including moisturizing effects and supporting skin healing, making it a doubly beneficial ingredient in skincare formulations. - Safety Profile: Vitamin E is widely regarded as safe for topical use, with a well-established track record in skincare and cosmetic products. Its use is not associated with endocrine disruption, making it a safer choice for consumers concerned about hormonal health. In cosmetics, vitamin E serves the same purpose as a preservative and is beneficial and safe
Recommended laboratory services	**Lab Formulation**: Developing multiple versions of the new formulation in the lab, incorporating the identified alternative ingredients. It's crucial to maintain the balance of the formulation to ensure the new ingredient integrates well without affecting the product's stability or efficacy.

	Compatibility and Stability Testing: Conducting thorough tests to evaluate the compatibility of new ingredients with the existing ones and assessing the stability of the new formulation under various conditions (e.g., temperature, light, and pH). *NB: CVA ltd. can help you manage scientific research in accredited laboratories in the EU*
Results	Substituting BHT with Vitamin E in The Ordinary's Retinol 0.5% in Squalane could potentially enhance the product's appeal to health-conscious consumers without compromising on efficacy. The change would align with growing consumer preferences for skincare formulations that are not only effective but also composed of ingredients with a reassuring safety profile.
Conclusion	In the evolving landscape of skincare, the commitment to continuously reviewing and optimizing ingredient lists in light of the latest scientific research and safety standards is crucial. By opting for safer, more natural alternatives like Vitamin E, brands can cater to the informed consumer's desire for products that nurture skin health without unnecessary risks. This analysis underscores the importance of ingredient transparency and the ongoing quest for safer, more effective skincare solutions. As consumers become increasingly savvy and health-conscious, the industry's move towards cleaner, safer formulations will no doubt become not just a trend, but a standard.
Sources	1. https://www.webmd.com/vitamins/ai/ingredientmono-1071/butylated-hydroxytoluene-bht 2. https://journeyfoods.io/blog/the-rise-of-bht-alternatives-in-common-foods 3. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/8493816/ 4. https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-08/sccs_o_257.pdf

CONTACT US:

www.CVAexpert.com

helloCVAexpert@gmail.com