Mineral Makeup

Mineral makeup in its most well-known form: powdered

Mineral Makeup Makes Its Mark

- First introduced to the market by Bare Escentuals with the brand bareMinerals™.
- Leslie Blodgett, founder of Bare Escentuals, says the products are "…composed of 100% pure minerals free of preservatives, talc, oil, fragrance and other harmful chemicals."
    - The company claims their "foundations, cheek and eye colors have been crushed to a silky, creamy powder form…"

Mineral makeup has become a huge trend in the cosmetic industry, with a rapidly growing number of competing products. And while there is no clear definition of what a product must or must not contain in order to claim to be a mineral makeup, it is widely agreed that the term applies to a kind of makeup that is *powdery* (rather than liquid or creamy), and contains certain minerals (such as sunscreen minerals) but does not contain oily or other liquid ingredients.

Most companies offer a powdered mineral makeup (either loose or compact), however some companies - Illuminaré for example, also offer a liquid mineral makeup. Each producer creates its own form of mineral makeup!

What Minerals are Used?

As there is no clear definition of the term mineral makeup, there is a wide variety in the ingredients found in mineral makeup:

- Sunscreen minerals like titanium dioxide and zinc oxide (often used in their micronized/superfine form) protect the skin from the damaging effects of sun rays by reflecting the UVA and UVB rays.
    - Both minerals are naturally derived, meaning they do not occur *in this form* in nature. Titanium Dioxide is naturally derived from the mineral ilmenite, and Zinc Oxide from zinc ore.
- Pigment minerals like iron oxides and micas are used to add different colors to cosmetics. These minerals, like the sunscreen minerals above, are also naturally derived.
    - Iron Oxides are inorganic colors, made up of insoluble metallic compounds (which are derived from natural sources like china clay or carbon deposits).
    - Micas are also natural colors, derived from the mineral Muscovite Mica. They provide glitter and luster effects as well as a silky feel to cosmetic formulations.
- Bismuth Oxychloride is not always included in mineral makeup; however, it can be used as both a pigment and a texturizer!
    - A pearlescent pigment composed of bismuth (a naturally occurring metallic element) that provides excellent whiteness and luster to mineral makeup. It also gives the mineral makeup a more compact, smoother texture.

Ingredients Typically *Not* Included

While there is no clear definition of what mineral makeup *is*, there are a few ingredients that are more often than not excluded when creating mineral makeup formulations:

Homemade Mineral Makeup: Cheap & Easy!

- The production of mineral makeup is easier than traditional foundation. It requires much fewer working steps (e.g., no emulsification) and the minerals are rather inexpensive
  - This makes it surprising that mineral makeup is priced so highly by various brands!
- So why not produce your own mineral makeup? It is very easy – basically all you need to do is blend various minerals and pigments together to create your own color shade.
  - On our website, www.makingcosmetics.com, you can find sample recipes of powder (as well as liquid) mineral makeup. Or you can buy our mineral makeup kit that contains all the ingredients, tools, and recipe for creaking a great powder mineral makeup.

Making your own mineral makeup is inexpensive, easy, and is a great way to ensure you always have your perfect shade!

Oily components are not typically included in most mineral makeup products. This helps to keep the makeup in a very finely ground, light powder that is easy to apply. The minerals in the makeup work with the skin's own fatty components to create a smooth cover without looking thick, cakey, or dull. However, sometimes a small amount of oil during formulation can help minerals blend together and hold together a little bit better.

Talc is another ingredient typically left out of mineral makeup formulations, although it is also a naturally derived mineral (derived from magnesium silicate). This is because talc has a reputation for being cancerogenic. In fact, its reputation is so bad that companies will proudly label their products as "talc free" to make the customer think it is a healthy and "true" mineral makeup. And many now think that a mineral makeup containing talc is not a mineral makeup! This is nonsense.

But is there scientific evidence of cancerogenicity? All accusations so far (as ovarian cancer upon perineal use of talc, or lung cancer upon talc inhalation) could never be shown clinically. As summarized in a recent review article by the Biomedical and Environmental Consultants, Inc. (Richland, WA) it was concluded that considering talc a carcinogen lacks convincing scientific documentation (see ref.).

The FDA also lists talc as a generally safe ingredient for food and cosmetics. Hence, we think that talc can be used safely in mineral makeup and, if needed, can provide more stability and texture to the powder. Talc may also be especially useful for oily skin.

Benefits of Mineral Makeup

Mineral makeup has several great advantages over traditional liquid or cream foundations:

- Not only do mineral makeups provide sun protection (and thus reduce the risks of UV-induced skin aging), but they are also highly water resistant and last all day long.
- Mineral makeup combines foundation, sunscreen, makeup, and concealer into one product, without giving a mask-like look and feel as other makeups do. Its easy application with the foundation brush (kabuki brush) gives a smooth, "airbrushed" effect and offers well-controlled coverage around the eyes, nose, and lips.
- Mineral makeup is also favorable for those who have allergies or problematic skin such as eczema, acne, or otherwise irritated skin.

References:
Wehner AP. Cosmetic talc should not be listed as a carcinogen: comments on NTP's deliberations to list talc as a carcinogen. Regul Toxicol Pharmacol. 2002; 36: 40-50.