

baby powder

<https://www.agoramos.com/cosmetics/baby/baby-powder>

Tags: cosmetics · baby

Related

baby

- [baby lotion](#)
- [baby wash](#)
- [baby](#)
- [baby bubble bath](#)
- [baby detangler](#)
- [diaper cream](#)

cosmetics

- [lash primer](#)
- [facial oil](#)
- [face powder](#)
- [body paint](#)
- [bubble bath](#)
- [lip gloss](#)

Baby Powder

Absorbent powder for the nappy area and skin folds. It is the most consequential product in this entire catalogue — the centre of the talc controversy, and the subject of a paediatric safety warning that predates it — and the honest summary is that **it is no longer recommended for infants at all**.

The paediatric position

Paediatric guidance advises against using powder on babies. The reason is not talc and not asbestos; it is **aspiration**.

A cloud of fine powder around an infant's face, released as a container is shaken over a changing table, can be **inhaled into the lungs**, where it causes acute respiratory distress and chemical pneumonitis. Cases have been reported, some fatal, and it happens fast. **The risk applies to cornstarch powder as much as to talc**, because the hazard is the particle size and the location, not the mineral.

Powder containers are also brightly coloured, shaken objects that infants reach for.

What to do instead for the nappy area: clean and dry thoroughly, change frequently, allow nappy-free time, and use a **zinc oxide or petrolatum barrier** — see [Diaper Cream](#). That is more effective than

powder for nappy rash and carries none of this risk.

The talc question

Separately, and for all ages.

Talc is a mined mineral and in some deposits occurs alongside **asbestos**. Cosmetic-grade talc is specified and tested to be asbestos-free, and an asbestos-contaminated cosmetic is **adulterated** under FD&C Act sec. 601. What has never existed is a standardised, regulator-mandated test method — which MoCRA directed FDA to create:

- **MoCRA required standardised methods for detecting asbestos in talc-containing cosmetic products.**
- **A proposed rule issued in December 2024.**
- It was **withdrawn in November 2025**, leaving the requirement unfinalised.

Litigation over talc-containing body powders has been extensive, has produced very large verdicts and settlements, and has changed the market: **major manufacturers withdrew talc-based baby powder from North American sale and reformulated to cornstarch**, later extending that globally.

Cornstarch avoids the mineral question entirely. It does not avoid the aspiration one.

If it is used at all

For an older child or an adult, not an infant:

- **Never shake it near a face.**
- **Dispense into your own hand, away from the child, then apply.**
- **Keep the container closed and out of reach.**
- **Never in the genital area**, where public health guidance now advises against talc use.
- **Ventilate.**

Where it sits in the rules

Cosmetic in the US — FDA primary category **(01) baby products**, overlapping with (12) personal cleanliness and (05) fragrance preparations, which explicitly covers dusting and talcum powders. **No premarket approval**, and — worth stating plainly — **no US regulation requires a warning about aspiration on a baby powder**, despite the paediatric guidance.

Talc is permitted; **asbestos is prohibited** and renders a product adulterated. Under MoCRA, facilities register, products are listed, and **serious adverse events are reportable within 15 business days**.

In the EU, talc is permitted under the general safety requirement, **asbestos appears in the Annex II prohibited list** of 1,766 entries, and **cosmetics for children under three require specific attention in the safety assessment**.

Shelf life

Two to three years or more. A dry powder has essentially no microbial risk and its only enemy is

moisture; a caked container has been damp.

But shelf life is not the operative question here. The operative advice is the paediatric one: **do not use powder on babies**.

Related

- [Baby](#) — the shelf this sits on, and the rest of it.
- [Cosmetics](#) — what the label is legally allowed to say, and the full catalogue.
- The rest of *Skin* — [Baby Lotion](#) · [Baby Oil](#) · [Baby Cream](#) · [Diaper Cream](#).
- [Body Powder](#) · [Dusting Powder](#) — the same talc question, for adults.
- [Health and Wellness](#) · [The FDA Isn't That Great](#) — the medical and regulatory context.
- Regulatory statements here follow the FDA and EU sources listed on [Cosmetics](#), read 16 August 2026.