

# Facial cleansers (foaming, cream, gel, oil, micellar): HMTc Standard

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CORRESPONDENCE

Corrections are logged publicly on the article page, each with its date, the affected value, and the source that resolved it.

## Abstract

The Heavy Metal Tested & Certified heavy-metal-safety standard for facial cleansers (foaming, cream, gel, oil, micellar) in Cosmetics and Personal Care, Rinse-off, evaluated on finished cosmetic as placed on market, total element content per unit mass of undiluted product as sold (µg/kg). Not a dietary basis, not a migration or leachate basis, and no use-pattern dilution credit.. 5 of 11 panel analytes publish a numeric limit taken from the strictest applicable government maximum; the remainder are held under mandatory control or a substantiated not-material determination.

### 1 | How every number on this standard is set

HMTc Method v2.0 (government-limit default): each numeric cell is the strictest applicable sovereign finished-cosmetic maximum for the product as placed on market, selected by minimum over a named multi-jurisdiction candidate set; unregulated cells are controls with a mandatory method and escalation rule, never invented numbers; never occurrence-derived.

### 2 | Master limit table

All values in ppb (µg/kg), as sold basis. A brand meeting every value qualifies for the mark.

| ANALYTE   | TIER   | HMTc LIMIT | BASIS                    |
|-----------|--------|------------|--------------------------|
| Lead (Pb) | Tier 1 | 1,000      | government maximum level |

|                             |        |           |                                          |
|-----------------------------|--------|-----------|------------------------------------------|
| Cadmium (Cd)                | Tier 1 | 100       | government maximum level                 |
| Total arsenic (tAs)         | Tier 2 | 500       | government maximum level                 |
| Inorganic arsenic (iAs)     | Tier 1 | ≤ tAs     | bounded by tAs (reflex speciation)       |
| Mercury, total (tHg)        | Tier 1 | 100       | government maximum level                 |
| Methylmercury (MeHg)        | Tier 1 | ≤ tHg     | bounded by tHg (reflex speciation)       |
| Nickel (Ni)                 | Tier 2 | 10,000    | government maximum level                 |
| Tin (Sn)                    | Tier 2 | 3,750,000 | human-grade read-across (European Union) |
| Aluminium (Al)              | Tier 2 | 560,000   | human-grade read-across (European Union) |
| Total chromium (Cr)         | Tier 2 | 50        | human-grade read-across (AU)             |
| Hexavalent chromium (Cr-VI) | Tier 2 | 5         | human-grade read-across (European Union) |

### 3 | Derivation – where each number comes from

Every cell traces to one named sovereign maximum level (the strictest for the nearest analog), or to an explicit control, not-material, or species-bounded determination. No occurrence statistic selects a certification value.

| ANALYTE                 | HMTC  | SOVEREIGN ANALOG / DETERMINATION                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lead (Pb)               | 1,000 | government maximum level                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Cadmium (Cd)            | 100   | government maximum level                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Total arsenic (tAs)     | 500   | government maximum level                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Inorganic arsenic (iAs) | ≤ tAs | iAs carries no product-specific sovereign cell; it is a component of and bounded by its parent total tAs (iAs ≤ tAs), an enforceable ceiling via reflex speciation rather than an empty cell. |
| Mercury, total (tHg)    | 100   | government maximum level                                                                                                                                                                      |

|                             |           |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Methylmercury (MeHg)        | ≤ tHg     | MeHg carries no product-specific sovereign cell; it is a component of and bounded by its parent total tHg (MeHg ≤ tHg), an enforceable ceiling via reflex speciation rather than an empty cell. |
| Nickel (Ni)                 | 10,000    | government maximum level                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Tin (Sn)                    | 3,750,000 | European Union — human-food analog                                                                                                                                                              |
| Aluminium (Al)              | 560,000   | European Union — human-food analog                                                                                                                                                              |
| Total chromium (Cr)         | 50        | AU — human-food analog                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Hexavalent chromium (Cr-VI) | 5         | European Union — human-food analog                                                                                                                                                              |

#### 4 | Cite this standard

Pendergrass, K. (2026). *Facial cleansers (foaming, cream, gel, oil, micellar): HMTc standard* (Standard No. 10.83138/hmtc.std.14.facial-cleansers). Institute of Contaminant Standards. <https://doi.org/10.83138/hmtc.std.14.facial-cleansers>

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## References

- [1] AU — human-food maximum levels  
Binds Cr. Strictest applicable human-food sovereign maximum for the nearest analog.  
MAXIMUM LEVEL
- [2] European Union — human-food maximum levels  
Binds Sn, Al, Cr-VI. Strictest applicable human-food sovereign maximum for the nearest analog.  
MAXIMUM LEVEL

### STATUS AND LICENCE

A normative certification standard, editorially reviewed and version-controlled in-house; every value traces to a named sovereign maximum level, disclosed in the derivation. © 2026 Institute of Contaminant Standards / Heavy Metal Certified. All rights reserved.

### DATA AVAILABILITY

The works this reference draws on are listed in full in the references above and on the briefing page at <https://heavymetalcertified.com/standards/facial-cleansers>.

### COMPETING INTERESTS

This briefing is published by the Heavy Metal Tested & Certified (HMTc) program, operated by the Institute of Contaminant Standards. Its statements about government regulations, toxicology, and occurrence are sourced to the cited primary and expert-body records and to the independently maintained Heavy Metal Index; the program's own certification thresholds are not used as evidence for any factual claim made here.

### PUBLICATION HISTORY

This revision 2026-08. The full dated record is maintained at <https://heavymetalcertified.com/standards/facial-cleansers>.

Primary legal instruments and expert-body assessments are named with their public identifiers; the underlying occurrence and toxicology corpus is maintained on the Heavy Metal Index.