

## *Sensorial analyses on cosmetic products*

Sensorial aspects, such as good fragrance, easy application, pleasant or unpleasant sensations felt during and/or after use, are essential to decree the success or failure of a cosmetic product.

This is true both for products not claiming peculiar effects (e.g. bath foams, after-bath treatments etc.) and for those with a specific purpose as **co-adjuvants** for real problems (e.g. cellulitis, wrinkles, dandruff or deodorants). Since the consumers, in fact, are becoming increasingly sceptical on the performance of a cosmetic product as it is described by the advertising message, they are unlikely to use a product which, according to laws in force, 'does not have any therapeutic purposes or effects', if the claimed effects are not associated with pleasant organoleptic features.

On one side it is in fact necessary to support the specific qualities claimed by a product with objective tests capable of undoubtedly proving its reliability, both considering the alleged expectation of a 'normally informed and reasonably careful and cautious average consumer' and offering a specialist doctor's supervision as well; on the other, a cosmetic product's basic power to create in the consumer a pleasant sensation of wellbeing both during its application and all day long, can be assessed only through sensorial tests. For example, the decision to launch or not a line of products with an unusual scent, like cocoa or liquorice, can be supported by a sensorial test, possibly on a large number of subjects, **unrelated to the manufacturing company**. But if the staff is part of the product development can not give an impartial evaluation of the product.

There are two basic kinds of tests **to carry out the sensorial analyses**:

- ❑ **Expert and trained panel:** a group of 20 or more expert specialists trained to be as more sensitive as possible, analyzes the product's sensorial features. The staff is considered as 'human instrument': therefore it is necessary to 'calibrate' them by means of reference products and evaluation of market leader products. These data undergo processing and statistical interpretation.
- ❑ **Consumer test:** this test provides the enrolling of 30-150 volunteers who use the product and then fill in the self-evaluation form. The questionnaire is previously agreed with the client on the basis of major interest parameters (pleasantness, fragrance, persistence, easiness of application, oiliness etc). These data undergo processing and statistical interpretation.