



NONWOVEN TERMS

For the informed employee

Cotton Fiber

Cotton is the natural fiber. It has been used for thousands of years. There are other natural fibers, but none are produced as actual fiber by the plant. Cotton has many properties that make it attractive and useful.

- Biodegradable
- Absorbent
- Stronger wet than dry
- Soft and pleasing to the feel
- Hypoallergenic (Almost no one is allergic to cotton.)
- Good release properties when used as a delivery system for wipes
- Fabric produced from cotton wicks away moisture
- It is a breathable fabric

There are various types of cotton.

- **Raw cotton** is cotton that has been separated from the seed, but still contains some trash. It is a natural cream color and can be carded and used in nonwovens for products that can allow some trash in the finished fabric.
- **Scoured cotton** is treated with chemicals to remove the outer layer of the fiber called pectin and any oils that are on the fiber. This cotton is more absorbent than raw cotton.
- **Bleached cotton** is scoured cotton that has been bleached to make it white. This cotton is often used for pharmaceutical applications.

Raw cotton is 91.0 % cellulose, 7.85% water, 0.55% protoplasm and pectins, 0.40% waxes and fatty substances, and 0.20% mineral salts.

The quality of cotton varies greatly since it is a natural fiber, and much depends upon the area of the world in which it is grown. The fiber varies in length from 1/2 to 2 1/2 inches in length with the majority being between 7/8 to 1 1/4 inches.



“There are no gains without pains.

Benjamin Franklin

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