

Safer Personal Care Products



Consumer Guide for Action

Stop and think about how many personal care products you use in one day. Shampoo, lotion, deodorant, soap, lip balm, cosmetics, hair spray, shaving products, toothpaste and then some. Children aren't left out either. Maybe they have their own bubble bath, diaper cream, sunscreen. Have you ever looked at the labels of these products? Are there any ingredients you recognize?

Companies who sell personal care products are not required to do pre-market safety testing, which means that the products you buy can contain anything from oatmeal to known human carcinogens. Here are some things you can do to protect you and your family from ingredients that may pose risks:

Simplify. Is there something you can do without or a product you can use less often? By reducing the number of chemicals contacting your skin every day, you will reduce any potential health risks associated with your products.

Read and verify labels. Marketing claims on personal care products are not regulated under the law, and can mean anything or nothing at all, including claims like natural, hypoallergenic, animal cruelty free, and fragrance free. Read the ingredient label carefully and contact the business to find out if the claims are true.

Use milder soaps. Soap cleans your skin, but also strips away your body's own natural protective oils. Choosing a milder soap can reduce dryness and thus your need for moisturizers or lotions.

Minimize or eliminate using dark hair dyes. Many contain ingredients that have been linked to cancer in some studies.

Cut down on powders. Avoid using baby powder on newborns and infants. A number of ingredients common in powder have been linked to cancer and other lung problems when they are inhaled. FDA warns that powders may cause lung damage if inhaled regularly.

Choose fragrance-free products. Fragrances can cause allergic reactions. Be aware though, products that claim to be "fragrance free" on the packaging may not be. They could contain masking fragrances that give off a neutral odor. Read the ingredient label - in products truly free of fragrance, the word "fragrance" will not appear there.



Reduce your use of nail polish. It's one of the few types of products that routinely contains ingredients linked to birth defects. Paint your toenails and skip the fingernails. Paint nails in a well-ventilated room, or outside, or avoid using nail polish altogether, particularly when you are pregnant. Browse our custom shopping guide for advice on nail polishes that contain fewer ingredients of concern.



Hold off on fluoridated toothpaste. Little kids eat toothpaste, and fluoride consumption has been linked to bone cancer in boys. There's a reason for the poison control warning on fluoridated toothpaste, so wait until they're at least six before giving it to them.

Be cautious of the following ingredients: Fragrance, phthalates, quaternium-15, diazolidinyl urea, imidazolidinyl urea, DMDM hydantoin, talc, alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEs), nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPEs), lauryl compounds (such as ammonium lauryl sulfate, monoethanolamine sulfate, sodium lauryl sulfate), DEA or TEA lauryl sulfate, polyethylene, polyethylene glycol, polyoxyethylene (Also watch out ingredients with the prefix, word, or syllable PEG, and "-eth" ingredients as in sodium laureth sulfate), diethanolamine (DEA), triethanolamine (TEA), DEA, TEA or MEA compounds (such as cocamide DEA, linoleamide MEA), formaldehyde, triclosan

Resources:

Skin Deep – Environmental Working Group – News about the safety of popular health and beauty brands. Skin Deep is a personal care product safety guide with in-depth information on 14,841 products - 1,052 brands of lotion, lip balm, deodorant, sunscreen and other popular products - and the 7,093 ingredients that form them. Skin Deep provides safety ratings and brand-by-brand comparisons that can help consumers choose safer products.
<http://www.ewg.org/reports/skindeep2/>

Campaign for Safe Cosmetics - <http://www.safecosmetics.org/>

Personal Care Products for Kids – Children's Health Environmental Coalition - http://www.checnet.org/healthhouse/education/articles-detail.asp?Main_ID=628

Organic Body Care – Organic Consumers Association - <http://www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/index.cfm>

The Key to Protection is Prevention

Take action now to get unsafe personal care products off our store shelves!

Resolution for Safe Personal Care Products for Women and Our Families – http://www.now.org/issues/health/safe_personal_care_products.html

Petition for Safe Cosmetics and Personal Care Products - http://www.now.org/issues/health/safe_personal_care_products.html

Petition to the Organic Trade Association and USDA National Organic Program – <http://www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/action.cfm>

Contact us to find out more and to join us on the path to a better future. Call 612-870-3458 or log on to www.HealthyLegacy.org

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