

Living Toxin-Free: *What You Need to Know*

Our skin absorbs up to 60 percent of what we put on it. Even if a chemical isn't so harmful that it affects us right away, some bioaccumulate in the body, therefore taking their toll over time. When you're dealing with chemicals that are carcinogenic, interfere with hormones (endocrine disruptors), or are even toxic to your nervous system, the goal is to minimize exposure as much as possible.

Additionally, these ingredients aren't always being used because they're effective. Often they're put in products simply because they're cheap or readily available.

There are millions of skin care products on the shelves, and thousands of ingredients in those products. Where to start?

Start with 12 of the most common and toxic chemicals that might be in your skin care, makeup, or body products.

Bisphenol A (BPA): Hormone disruptor that may also alter DNA. Found in: plastic bottles, lining of aluminum food cans, possibly in eyeshadow and styling gel.

Mineral Oil (liquid petrolatum; paraffin oil): By-product of petroleum distillation that may cause contact dermatitis. Found in: baby lotions, cold creams, ointments.

Parabens (methyl-, isobutyl-, propyl- and others): Used for mold-prevention. Parabens are endocrine (or hormone) disruptors, which alter important hormone mechanisms in our bodies. May play a role in triggering breast cancer. Found in: shampoo, face cleanser, body wash, body lotion, foundations.

Phthalates (DBP, DEHP, DEP and others): Plasticizing chemicals used to make products pliable or make fragrances stick to skin. Phthalates disrupt endocrine system and may cause birth defects. Found in: synthetic fragrance, nail polish, hairspray.

Sodium Lauryl Sulfate and Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLS and SLES): Are surfactants that can cause skin irritation or trigger allergies. Contaminated with 1,4-dioxane, a byproduct of a petrochemical, which is used to process other chemicals in order to make them less harsh. Found in: shampoo, body wash, bubble bath.

Synthetic Fragrance: Engineered scent that may contain any combination of 3,000+ stock chemical ingredients, including hormone disruptors and allergens. Fragrance formulas are protected under federal law's classification of trade secrets, and therefore can remain undisclosed. Found in: all types of cosmetics.

Hydroquinone: Skin lightening chemical that inhibits the production of melanin and is linked to cancer, organ toxicity and skin irritation. Found in: skin lightening creams.



Your true path to wellness.

Retinyl palmitate An antioxidant that combats skin aging, however, it can trigger development of skin tumors and lesions when used on skin in the presence of sunlight. May contribute to unsafe amounts of vitamin A. Avoid vitamin A-laden cosmetics on the lips and over large portions of the body. EWG recommends that consumers avoid sunscreens, lip products and skin lotions that contain vitamin A or retinyl palmitate, which is also called *retinyl acetate, retinyl linoleate and retinol*.

Oxybenzone: Most sunscreens on the shelves contain a harmful chemical called oxybenzone, which has been shown in some studies to be carcinogenic and hormone-mimicking. We should wonder if it's better to brave the sun alone than to wear a sunscreen that's toxic.

Lead: A proven neurotoxin linked to miscarriage, reduced fertility, and delayed onset of puberty for females. Lead turns weak stress hormones into stronger stress hormones. About seven years ago, the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics found lead in over half of the 33 brands of lipstick they tested. A more recent study by the FDA tested popular brands and found 400 that contained up to 7.19 ppm of lead. The average woman eats 10 pounds of lipstick over a lifetime.

Aluminum: Classified as a neurotoxin, some studies have linked aluminum to Alzheimer's disease, though recent research calls that into question. Other studies suggest a link between aluminum and breast cancer and other brain disorders.

PEG's: Polyethylene glycols, or PEGs, are petroleum-based compounds that are used to thicken, soften, and gelatinize cosmetics, making them a common ingredient in cream-based products. The main issue with PEGs is that they are often contaminated with ethylene oxide and 1,4-dioxane. (Ethylene oxide is a known human carcinogen, potentially harmful to the nervous system and human development. 1,4-dioxane is a possible human carcinogen that can remain in the environment for long periods of time without degrading)

Living Toxin-Free: What You Need to About Cleaning

The EPA has now ranked “indoor air Pollution among the TOP environmental dangers. Much of this is coming from cleaning products! Acute effects of exposure can include headaches, dizziness, fatigue, and irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat, as well as exacerbated symptoms of asthma and other respiratory illnesses. Long-term effects (following long or repeated exposure to indoor pollutants) include respiratory diseases, heart disease, and even cancer. The indoor pollutants that can cause these reactions are so common that the EPA strongly recommends everyone improve the air quality of their home, regardless of whether symptoms are currently present.

All Purpose Cleaning Spray

- *Add fruit peels to a large mason jar, and cover them with vinegar. The jar should be about half full.*
- *Cover it with a lid, and let it sit for two weeks for the citrus to infuse.*
- *After two weeks, strain mixture through a sieve into a bowl and discard the peels.*
- *Pour the cleaner into a bottle and use it as an all purpose-cleaner.*
- *Add herb essential oils like lavender, clove, thyme, or rosemary!*

Real Clean Air Freshener

- *Mix 15-20 drops of essential oils (your choice) with 1 tbsp of Baking Soda in a large bowl.*
- *Add 2 cups of water and mix until dissolved. Pour into spray bottle and label.*

Disinfectant

Just mix 2 cups of water, 3 tablespoons of liquid soap, and 20-30 drops of tea tree oil.

Garbage Disposal Trick!

- *Pour 1 cup of vinegar into an ice cube tray and top off the slots with water.*
- *Once they're frozen, toss a few down the disposal and let it run.*

Clean Ingredients to Stock:

Castille Soap: *Cuts through grease and grime.*

Baking Soda: *Virus killing abilities, tough on greasy, grime.*

Vinegar: *Eliminates grease, soap scum, and grime.*

Lemon Juice: *Eliminates mold and mildew and cuts through grease to leave a shine.*

Olive Oil: *Polisher and cleaner.*

Essential Oils: *Many anti bacterial and smell great!*