

TODAY
THERE ARE MORE THAN
80,000
CHEMICALS ON THE MARKET,
MANY WITH KNOWN OR
SUSPECTED HEALTH EFFECTS.

Chemicals are released into the environment in the manufacture and use of many products, which then enter our bodies through:

AIR, WATER, FOOD, AND SKIN

We are all exposed to various toxic chemicals in our everyday life, but there are ways to limit that exposure. Here we provide some information on how to adjust your eating, living and purchasing habits to succeed in that goal.

GET IN THE HABIT OF
READING LABELS & LEARN
ABOUT HOW CHEMICALS
AFFECT OUR HEALTH.



Basic principles of environmental health and toxicology are presented in the free e-book, *A Small Dose of Toxicology*. More about all issues mentioned in here can be found on the Silent Spring Institute website <http://www.silentspring.org>.

PROTECT
YOURSELF

IN PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

K E E P I N G
H A R M F U L
C H E M I C A L S

out of your life.

1. LEARN WHICH COSMETICS COMPANIES

AVOID OR ARE PHASING OUT

HARMFUL CHEMICALS.

Parabens

Found in:

cosmetic products, including makeup, moisturizers, hair care products, and shaving creams/gels

Health Concerns:

parabens can penetrate the skin, and can mimic the effects of estrogen in the body

What to look for on the label:

butylparaben, ethylparaben, methylparaben, and propylparaben

Phthalates

Found in:

color cosmetics, fragranced lotions, body washes and hair care products, nail polish and treatment

Health concerns:

endocrine disrupting compounds that have been associated with cancer, impaired fertility, and male birth defects

What to look for on the label:

dibutyl phthalate (DPB), diethyl phthalate (DEP), and diethylhexyl phthalate (DEHP)

2. AVOID WEARING PERFUME AND USING

OTHER PRODUCTS WITH FRAGRANCE.

What is fragrance? defined by the FDA as a combination of chemicals that gives each perfume and cologne its distinct scent; often include chemicals that are allergy triggers or irritants. Phthalates often appear as an ingredient in fragranced products.

Found in: sunscreen, shampoo, soap, body wash, deodorant, body lotion, makeup, facial cream, skin toner, serums, exfoliating scrubs and perfume

What to look for on the label: fragrance, perfume, parfum, essential oil blend, aroma

cancer
reproductive toxicity
immunotoxicity



3. AVOID USING NAIL POLISH AND HAIRSPRAY,

AS THEY OFTEN CONTAIN PHTHALATES.

Health concerns: Dibutyl phthalate, which is used to keep nail polish from chipping, has been found to increase the likelihood that laboratory animals will give birth to offspring with birth defects.

Select brands with the least toxic ingredients. Apply the polish and hairspray outside or in a well-ventilated area.



4. AVOID PRODUCTS WHOSE CONTENT LABELS

LIST ANIMAL PLACENTA, PLACENTAL EXTRACT,

ESTROGEN, OR OTHER HORMONES.

Placenta may contain estrogen as well as other active hormones. These ingredients are commonly found in personal care products including cosmetics, shampoos, and styling aids that are widely marketed to African-Americans.

Estrogen is a hormone disruptor associated with breast cancer. Postmenopausal women, children, and men are especially sensitive to estrogen.

5. LOOK FOR PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

MARKED "FRAGRANCE-FREE" INSTEAD

OF "UNSCENTED".

Many products labeled as "unscented" contain masking fragrances to cover up a chemical smell; these fragrances in turn may contain phthalates.

6. USE SUNSCREEN CAREFULLY.

Avoid chemical UV filters in sunscreen as many of these are known or probably hormone disruptors. Common UV filters to avoid include benzophenone, oxybenzone, and octyl methoxycinnamate or octinoxate. Covering up with shade, hats, and clothing is best. When shading isn't possible, choose mineral-based filters like zinc oxide or titanium dioxide in non-nano form."

Wear a wide-brim hat to cover your face and clothing to cover exposed skin.



Look for a sunscreen with SPF 15-50 that contains zinc oxide, titanium oxide, or avobenzone.

7. AVOID PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

THAT LIST PARABENS AS INGREDIENTS.

Commonly found in personal care products such as deodorants, shampoos, conditioners, hair styling gels, shaving gels, and lotions.

8. TAKE SHORTER SHOWERS.

During warm showers, you inhale airborne toxics from the water. You also open your pores to more easily absorb toxics from your personal care products.

If your water supply is highly chlorinated, consider a charcoal filter for your shower head.

