



Are Your Cosmetic Products Safe?



Scientific studies have shown that many common ingredients in cosmetic products may be harmful to people, wildlife and the environment. Some of the chemicals used are **hormone disruptors**, which have the potential to interfere with our natural hormones and impact our health. Thankfully, safer alternatives are available. Here are some steps you can take to reduce exposures in your home and to protect your family.

Follow these tips to reduce your exposure to hormone disruptors:



Simplify – Choose products with simpler ingredient lists and fewer synthetic chemicals. Consider unscented products and avoid synthetic fragrance (look for the word “fragrance” or “parfum” on labels). Ask yourself if you really need that product and all those extra chemical exposures; use fewer products overall.



Read the label - Since the cosmetic industry is largely unregulated, it's up to us to do our own research to find the safest products. Most of us at least look at the labels when we shop for cosmetics. But do we know what we're looking for? Not always. There are no legal standards for personal care products labeled as “pure,” “natural” or “organic,” so look beyond the marketing claims and read labels carefully.



Find the safest cosmetics - You can use the Skin Deep database to assess your favorite products for toxicity at www.ewg.org/skindeep/. You can also check out the GoodGuide at www.goodguide.com/ or download the free app on your phone or tablet.



Get Involved – It shouldn't be legal to sell cosmetics that contain dangerous ingredients. We support the Safe Cosmetics Act 2013 that would protect our health and give consumers better information to make smart choices. Stay informed, speak up, and spread the word!

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Green Beauty Labels



Hormone Disrupting Chemicals to look for in Personal Care Products



Phthalates

Use: To make fragrances last longer and to make nail polish smoother.

Found in: Perfumes, scented soaps, shampoos, lotions, and other beauty products. Air fresheners and scented household cleansers. Nail polish.

Health effects: Linked to behavior problems and allergies in children. May effect reproductive development in males.

How it's listed on the label: "Fragrance" or "parfum"

Buy instead: Unscented or naturally scented products.



Parabens

Use: A preservative to prevent growth of mold or bacteria

Found in: Foundation, mascara, eye liner, eye shadow, and other cosmetics

Health effects: Mimics estrogen. Has been linked to breast cancer, but little is known about how it affects our health.

How it's listed on the label: Methyl paraben, ethyl paraben, propyl paraben

Buy instead: Mineral based make-up made without parabens.



Triclosan

Use: To kill bacteria

Found in: Antibacterial or antimicrobial soaps and cleansers. Colgate Total toothpaste.

Health effects: Linked to changes in estrogen and thyroid hormone. Long term health effects not known.

How it's listed on the label: Triclosan, "antibacterial"

Buy instead: Regular soap or toothpaste kills germs just as well.



Oxybenzone

Why it's used: To block UV radiation

Found in: Sunscreens, foundation, blush, and other cosmetics

Health effects: Has been associated with decrease in sperm production in rats and with changes in birth weight in humans.

How it's listed on the label: oxybenzone, BP-3

Buy instead: Zinc oxide or titanium dioxide based sunscreens