



# SAFER SKINCARE

Top 6 Chemicals to Avoid in Your Beauty Products

By Dr. Heather N.D.



## My Story

As a physician, health prevention - specifically with diet and lifestyle choices - is where my focus lies. I have spent years speaking on the importance of what we put in our bodies: looking at food labels, choosing whole, local, organic, non - GMO foods. This helps our bodies do what they do best: keep us healthy and strong.

I have taken health prevention a step deeper from not just what we put in our bodies, but what we put on it. Our largest organ, the skin, is permeable meaning whatever we put on it, is quickly absorbed. This is important to note because we have seen an increase in diseases like cancer, infertility, asthma and allergies which studies have shown may be linked to chemicals. This forces us to be aware and consider not only what we put in our bodies, but on.

## Approximate Amount of Skincare Products Used Each Day

Females: 12  
Teens: 18\*  
Males: 6

(these products range from shampoo & conditioner, to soap, to shaving cream, to body cream, hair products and cosmetics)

\*EWG studies discovered that adolescent girls' bodies contained a high amount of chemicals: phthalates (mostly from fragrance), triclosan, parabens; in blood and urine samples.

## Why Reading Labels On Your Personal Care Products Is Important

The personal care industry, including, cosmetics and skincare products - has a yearly gross of approximately \$62 billion. However, the last law passed in this industry was in 1938 and is less than 2 pages long. With this statistic, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not have the power to ask cosmetic companies for safety data or issue recalls of cosmetics or skincare products found to be unsafe. This is a valid concern, since in the U.S., only 30 ingredients are banned from this industry compared to the European Union (EU) that bans close to 1,400 ingredients from all their cosmetics.



## In Addition:

- We are exposed to approximately 80 to 126 different chemical ingredients everyday.
- And 80 to 90% of them have never been tested.

## Top 6 Chemicals To Look For & Avoid On Labels

### Triclosan & Triclocarban

#### why is it used?

Triclosan is used as a preservative and an anti-bacterial agent (to resist bacteria)

#### where is it found?

antiperspirants/deodorants, cleansers, hand sanitizers, liquid soap, soap bars and toothpaste

#### safety concerns:

Triclosan passes through the skin and may interfere with hormone function creating a dis-balance within the endocrine system.

#### side note:

Any product that says, "anti-bacterial," will most likely have triclosan in it. It is extremely toxic to the aquatic environment.

### Parabens

Other names: methylparaben, isobutylparaben, propylparaben

#### why is it used?

Parabens are used as preservatives (to prevent the growth of bacteria) and in fragrances

#### where is it found?

shampoo, face cleanser, body wash, body lotion, foundation

#### safety concerns:

Parabens are estrogen-mimicking (ie: alter important hormonal mechanisms in our bodies). Parabens have been seen in human breast cancer tissues, indicating a strong connection between breast cancer and cosmetic and skincare products use.

#### side note:

An estimated 75 to 90 percent of cosmetics contain parabens.



## **PEGs**

Other names: cetareth/polyethylene compounds (polyethylene glycols)

### **why is it used?**

PEGs are a petroleum- based compounds primarily used as a cream base in cosmetics to thicken and soften products, in addition to aiding in retaining moisture in the skin.

### **where is it found?**

cosmetics, creams, sunscreen, shampoo

### **safety concerns:**

These synthetic chemicals are frequently contaminated with 1,4-dioxane and ethylene oxide, both known as a human carcinogen. PEGs also are associated with disrupting the nervous system and causing skin irritations.

### **side note:**

In a study, U.S. researchers found 1,4-dioxane as a contaminant in 46 of 100 products that were labeled natural or organic.

## **Formaldehyde**

### **why is it used?**

It is used as a preservative and antiseptic.

### **where is it found?**

cosmetics, shampoo, body wash, bubble bath

### **safety concerns:**

Chronic exposure, being exposed over a long period of time, has been linked to cancer. It also causes difficulty breathing and skin sensitivities.

### **side note:**

Formaldehyde releasers: Bronopol, DMDM hydantoin, Diazolidinyl urea, Imidzaolidinyl urea and Quaternium-15 are used in cosmetics as preservatives to slow down/kill the growth of bacteria.

## **Fragrance**

### **why is it used?**

To enhance the smell of cosmetics and skin care products.

### **where is it found?**

Fragrances (or perfume) are found in almost everything: laundry detergent to deodorant to body lotion. When listed on the label it almost always indicates a mixture of dozens of chemicals.

### **safety concerns:**

Fragrances may contain hormone disruptors and are associated with a myriad of ailments such as allergies, migraines, asthma and skin irritation.



**side note:**

Phthalates (DBP, DEHP, DEP and others): are added to fragrance to allow the scent to stick to the skin. They may cause a dis-balance in the endocrine system leading to many hormonal problems.

**BHA** (butylated hydroxyanisole)

and

**BHT** (butylated hydroxytoluene)

**why is it used?**

BHA and BHT are used as preservatives.

**where is it found?**

They are found in personal care products (lipsticks, moisturizers, diaper creams) and in food and food packaging.

**safety concerns:**

In animal studies, BHA and BHT have shown to produce liver damage, cancer, and also may cause skin irritations.

## Important Note

There are many companies that strive to make safe products, and do not intentionally add toxic chemicals to their products, yet, a few things that may occur in processing:

1. Chemical reactions happening inside the bottle of product (such as formaldehyde in shampoo) or during manufacturing (such as 1,4 dioxane in moisturizers or heavy metals in color cosmetics).
2. Companies when purchasing bulk ingredients from ingredient suppliers (aloe vera gel or grapefruit seed extract), may inadvertently, get an already-preserved raw ingredient (aloe vera gel with added phenoxyethanol, or grapefruit seed extract with added methylparaben).

**side note:**

The lack of regulation by the federal government gives companies the freedom not to disclose preservatives despite the fact the end product may contain it.

## Why We Need Change

A variety of diseases is on the rise in the US. One in every 3 women will get cancer and many people suffer from infertility or children that have asthma, allergies and learning disabilities. Presently in the U.S., it is completely legal for companies to use toxic chemicals in their skincare products even if the ingredients are linked to cancer or other health problems.



## What You Can Do

### 1. Take Action:

Call the capitol switchboard at 202.224.3121 and ask to be connected to one of your U.S. senators. Say which state you live in. The operator will connect you to one of your U.S. senators' offices. Once you are connected, you will have the option to either leave a message for your senator or speak with a friendly staff member.

(dialogue can be similar to this: "I'm very concerned about harmful ingredients found in cosmetics and skin care products. I'm asking the senator to take action and update our cosmetic safety laws to better protect our health".)

### 2. Text:

"BetterBeauty" to 52886 to ask all of your members of Congress for better beauty laws.

## Ingredient Safety

To learn more about toxic chemicals, visit Beautycounter's, **The Never List**. This list is made up of more than 1,500 questionable or harmful chemicals that they never use as ingredients in their products. They are a company that is committed to a health and safety standard that goes well beyond what is legally required in the United States.

### Beautycounter, The Never List

This list includes dozens of common toxic ingredients that Beautycounter avoids in all their products: 1,500 ingredients to date.

### Environmental Working Group

"The Environmental Working Group's mission is to empower people to live healthier lives in a healthier environment. With breakthrough research and education, we drive consumer choice and civic action."

### Made Safe

"MADE SAFE is America's first nontoxic seal for products we use every day, from baby to personal care to household and beyond. We certify that products you use on your body, with your family, and in your home are made with safe ingredients not known or suspected to harm human health."

### Skin Deep

Skin Deep puts information in consumers' hands; to understand and know know what's in the products you purchase and how those products may affect your health.



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